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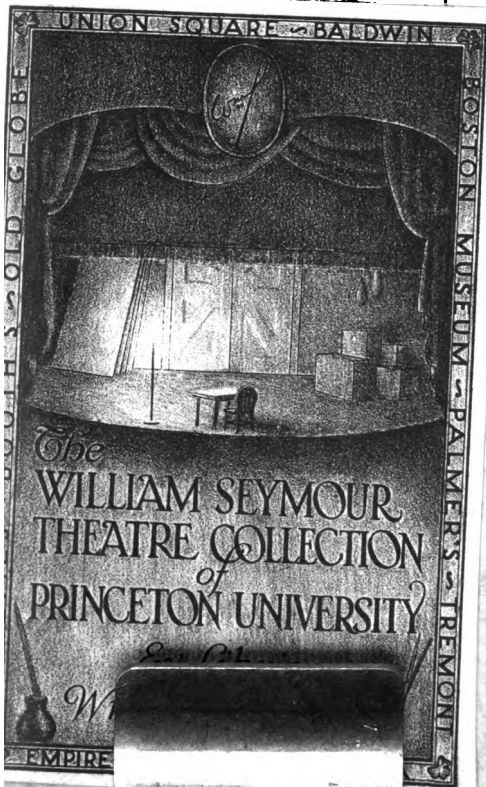
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ANNEXED.

W. Seymour
South Dearbury



THE
Select
DRAMATIC WORKS
OF
SHERIDAN.

THE
SELECT
DRAMATIC WORKS

OF
Richard Brinsley Butler
Sheridan,

containing :

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL, A COMEDY :

THE RIVALS, A COMEDY :

PIZARRO, A TRAGIC PLAY.



Paris. — Lyons.
CORMON AND BLANC.

PARIS, 70, MAZARINE STREET.

LYONS, 1, ROGER STREET; 3, PREFECTURE STREET.

—
1835.

Prologue.

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

A School for Scandal! tell me, I beseech you,
Needs there a school this modish art to teach you?

No need of lessons now, the knowing think;

We might as well be taught to eat and drink.

Caused by a dearth of scandal, should the vapours

Distress our fair ones—let them read the papers;

Their powerful mixtures such disorders hit;

Crave what you will—there's *quantum sufficit*.

« Lord! » cries my Lady *Wormwood* (who loves tattle,

And puts much salt and pepper in her prattle),

Just ris'n at noon, all night at cards when threshing

Strong tea and scandal—« Bless me, how refreshing?

« Give me the papers. *Lisp*—how bold and free! (*sips*)

« Last night Lord *L.* (*sips*) was caught with Lady *D.*

« For aching heads what charming *sol volatile*! (*sips*)

« If Mrs. *B.* will still continue flirting,

« We hope she'll DRAW, or we'll UNDRAW the curtain.

« Fine satire, poz—in public all abuse it,

« But, by ourselves; (*sips*) our praise we can't refuse it.

« Now; *Lisp*, read you—there, at that dash and star: »

« Yes, ma'am—A certain lord had best beware,

« Who lives not twenty miles from Grosvenor Square;

« For should he Lady *W.* find willing,

« *Wormwood* is bitter »—« Oh! that's me, the villain!

Throw it behind the fire, and never more

(RECAP)

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« Let that vile paper come within my door. »
 Thus at our friends we laugh, who feel the dart;
 To reach our feelings, we ourselves must smart.
 Is our young bard so young, to think that he
 Can stop the full spring-tide of calumny?
 Knows he the world so little, and its trade?
 Alas! the devil's sooner raised than laid.
 So strong, so swift, the monster there's no gagging:
 Cut Scandal's head off, still the tongue is wagging.
 Proud of your smiles once lavishly bestow'd,
 Again our young Don Quixote takes the road
 To show his gratitude he draws his pen,
 And seeks this hydra, Scandal, in his den.
 For your applause all perils he would through—
 He'll fight—that's write—a cavaliero true,
 Till every drop of blood—that's ink—is spilt for you.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS and ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

* * * The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

R.

R.C.

C.

L.C.

L.

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Sir Peter Teazle.
Sir Oliver Surface.
Joseph Surface.
Charles Surface.
Crabtree.
Sir Benjamin Backbite
Rowley.
Moses.

Trip.
Snake.
Careless.
Sir Harry Bumper.
Lady Teazle.
Maria.
Lady Sneerwell.
Mrs. Candour.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — Lady Sneerwell's House.

Discovered LADY SNEERWELL, R. *at the dressing-table.*

Snake *drinking chocolate*, L.

LADY S. The paragraphs, you say, Mr. Snake, were all inserted?

SNAKE. They were, madam; and as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion whence they came.

LADY S. (R.) Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

SNAKE. (L.) That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish. In the common course of things, I think it must reach Mrs. Clackitt's ears within four and twenty hours; and then, you know, the business is as good as done.

LADY S. Why, truly, Mrs. Clackitt has a very pretty talent, and a great deal of industry.

SNAKE. True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day. To my knowledge she has been the cause of six matches being broken off, and three sons being disinherited; of four forced elopements, as many close confinements; nine separate maintenances, and two divorces. Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a tête-à-tête in the Town and Country Magazine, when the parties, perhaps, had never seen each other's face before in the course of their lives.

LADY S. She certainly has talents, but her manner is gross.

SNAKE. 'Tis very true.—She generally designs well, has a free tongue and a bold invention; but her colouring is too dark, and her outlines often extravagant. She wants that delicacy of tint and mellowness of sneer, which distinguish your ladyships scandal.

LADY S. Ah! You are partial; Snake.

SNAKE. Not in the least—every body allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or a look than many can with the most laboured detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

LADY S. Yes, my dear Snake; and I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts. [*They rise.*] Wounded myself in the early part of my life by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own reputation.

SNAKE. Nothing can be more natural. But, Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at a loss to guess your motives.

LADY S. I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbour, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family?

SNAKE. I do. Here are two young men, to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death; the eldest possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of—the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character: the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship's, and apparently your favourite: the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her. Now, on the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a good jointure, should not close with the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface; and more so why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

LADY S. Then at once to unravel this mystery, I must inform you, that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

SNAKE. No!

LADY S. His real attachment is to Maria, or her fortune—but finding in his brother a favoured rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions, and profit by my assistance.

SNAKE. Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

LADY S. Heavens! how dull you are! Cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto, through shame, have concealed even from you? Must I confess, that Charles, that libertine, that extravagant, that bankrupt in fortune and reputation, that he it is for whom I'm thus anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice every thing?

SNAKE. Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent: but how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential?

LADY S. For our mutual interest. I have found him out a long time since. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious—in short, a sentimental knave; while, with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

SNAKE. Yes: yet Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England—and above all, he praises him as a man of sentiment.

SADY S. True—and with the assistance of his sentiment and hypocrisy, he has brought him entirely into his interest with regard to Maria; while poor Charles has no friend in the house, though, I fear, he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Enter SERVANT, L.

SERV. Mr. Surface.

LADY S. [*Crosses c.*] Show him up. [*Exit Servant, L.*] He generally calls about this time. I don't wonder at people giving him to me for a lover.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE, L.

JOSEPH S. (L.) My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to day? M. Snake, your most obedient.

LADY S. (c.) Snake has just been rallying me on our mutual attachment; but I have informed him of our real views. You know how useful he has been to us, and, believe me, the confidence is not ill placed.

JOSEPH S. Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's sensibility and discernment.

LADY S. Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress, Maria—or, what is more material to me, your brother.

JOSEPH S. I have not seen either since I left you; but I can inform you that they never meet. Some of your stories have taken a good effect on Maria.

LADY S. Ah! my dear Snake! the merit of this belongs to you: but do your brother's distresses increase?

JOSEPH S. Every hour. I am told he has had another execution in the house yesterday. In short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed any thing I have ever heard of.

LADY S. Poor Charles!

JOSEPH S. True, madam; notwithstanding his vices, one cannot help feeling for him. Poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not feel for the distresses of a friend, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves. —

X LADY S. O Lud! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

JOSEPH S. Egad, that's true! — I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter; — however, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by one of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

SNAKE. I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming: I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to you. — Mr. Surface, your most obedient.

JOSEPH S. [*Crossing to Snake.*] Sir, your very devoted.

[*Exit Snake*] Lady Sneerwell, I am very sorry you have put any farther confidence in that fellow.

LADY S. (L.) Why so?

JOSEPH S. (R.) I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward, and has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

LADY S. And do you think he would betray us?

JOSEPH S. Nothing more likely :—take my word for't, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow hasn't virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villainy.—Ah! Maria!

Enter MARIA, L.

LADY S. (C.) Maria, my dear, how do you do?—What's the matter?

MARIA. (L.) Oh! there is that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardian's, with his odious uncle, Crabtree; so I slipped out, and ran hither to avoid them,

LADY S. Is that all?

JOSEPH S. (R.) If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed,

LADY S. Nay, now you are severe; for I dare swear the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you were here.—But, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done, that you should avoid him so?

MARIA. Oh, he has done nothing—but 'tis for what he has said: his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

JOSEPH S. Ay, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing him—for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend; and his uncle Crabtree's as bad.

LADY S. Nay, but we should make allowance.—Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

MARIA. For my part, I own, madam, wit loses its respect with me, when I see it in company with malice—What do you think, Mr. Surface? [*Crosses to him.*]

JOSEPH S. Certainly, madam; to smile at the jest which

plants a thorn in another's breast is to become a principal in the mischief.

LADY S. (L.) Pshaw!—there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill nature : the malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick.—What's your opinion, Mr. Surface ?

JOSEPH S. (R.) To be sure , madam ; that conversation , where the spirit of raillery is suppressed, will ever appear tedious and insipid.

MARIA. (C.) Well , I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable ; but in a man, I am sure, it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalry, and a thousand little motives to depreciate each other ; but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

Enter SERVANT, L.

SERV. Madam, Mrs. Candour is below, and if your ladyship's at leisure , will leave her carriage.

LADY S. Beg her to walk in.—[*Exit Servant, L.*] Now, Maria , however, here is a character to your taste : for though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, every body allows her to the best natured and best sort of woman.

MARIA. Yes ,—with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence , she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

JOSEPH S. I'faith that's true, Lady Sneerwell : whenever I hear the current running against the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence

LADY S. Hush!—here she is!—

X

Enter MRS. CANDOUR, L.

MRS. CAN. My dear Lady Sneerwell , how have you been t his century?—Mr. Surface, what news do you hear?—though indeed it is no matter, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

JOSEPH S. (R.) Just so , indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. C. [*Crosses to Maria.*] Oh, Maria! child,—what! is the whole affair off between you and Charles?—His extravagance, I presume—the town talks of nothing else.

MARIA. (R. C.) I am very sorry, ma'am, the town has so little to do.

Mrs. C. (L. C.) True, true, child: but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it: as I indeed was to learn, from the same quarter, that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle, have not agreed lately as well as could be wished.

MARIA. 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

Mrs. C. Very true, child:—but what's to be done?—People will talk—there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filigree Flirt.—But, Lord! there's no minding what one hears; though, to be sure, I had this from very good authority.

MARIA. Such reports are highly scandalous.

Mrs. C. So they are, child—shameful, shameful! But the world is so censorious, no character escapes.—Lord, now, who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion? Yet such is the ill-nature of people, that they say her uncle stopt her last week, just as she was stepping into the York Mail with her dancing-master.

MARIA. I'll answer for't, there are no grounds for that report.

Mrs. C. Ah, no foundation in the world, I dare swear; no more, probably, than for the story circulated last month, of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino;—though, to be sure, that matter was never rightly cleared up.

JOSEPH S. The licence of invention some people take is monstrous indeed.

MARIA. 'Tis so,—but, in my opinion, those who report such things are equally culpable.

Mrs. C. To be sure they are; tale-bearers are as bad as the tale-makers—'tis an old observation, and a very true one: but what's to be done, as I said before? how will

you prevent people from talking? To-day, Mrs. Clackitt assured me, Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She likewise hinted that a certain widow, in the next street, had got rid of her dropsy and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner. And at the same time, Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed, that Lord Buffalo had discovered his lady at a house of no extraordinary fame; and that Sir Harry Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation.—But, Lord, do you think I would report these things?—No, no! tale-bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale-makers.

JOSEPH S. Ah! Mrs. Candour, if every body had your forbearance and good-nature!

Mrs. C. I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people attacked behind their backs; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintance, I own I always love to think the best. [*Lady Sneerwell and Maria retire a little up.*] By the by, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined?

JOSEPH S. I am afraid his circumstances are very bad indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. C. Ah! I heard so—but you must tell him to keep up his spirits; every body almost is in the same way—Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, and Mr. Nickit—all up, I hear, within this week; so if Charles is undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined too, and that, you know, is a consolation.

JOSEPH S. Doubtless, ma'am—a very great one.

Enter SERVANT, L.

SERV. Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite.

[Exit Servant.]

LADY S. So Maria, you see your lover pursues you; positively you s'ha'n't escape.

Enter CRABTREE, 1st and SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, 2nd. L.

CRAB. Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand—*[Crosses to Mrs. Candour.]*—Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are

acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite? Egad! ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet, too; isn't he, Lady Sneerwell?

SIR B. (L.) O fie, uncle!

CRAB. Nay, egad, it's true; I back him at a rebus or a charade against the best rhymers in the kingdom.—Has your ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire?—Do, Benjamin, repeat it, or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowie's conversazione. Come now;—your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander, and——

SIR B. Uncle, now—pr'ythee—

CRAB. I faith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at these things.

LADY S. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

SIR B. To say truth, ma'am, 'tis very vulgar to print; and as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons on particular people, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties. [*Crosses to Maria.*] However, I have some love elegies, which, when favoured with this lady's smiles, I mean to give the public.

CRAB. 'Fore heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalise you!—you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.

SIR B. Yes, madam, I think you will like them, when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall murmur through a meadow of margin.—'Fore Gad they will be the most elegant things of their kind!

CRAB. [*Crossing to Mrs. Candour.*] But, ladies, that's true—have you heard the news?

MRS. C. What, sir, do you mean the report of—

CRAB. No, ma'am, that's not it—Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

MRS. C. Impossible!

CRAB. Ask Sir Benjamin.

SIR B. 'Tis very true, ma'am; every thing is fixed, and the wedding liveries bespoke.

CRAE. Yes—and they do say there were very pressing reasons for it.

LADY S. (L.) Why, I have heard something of this before.

MRS. C. (L. C.) It can't be—and I wonder any one should believe such a story, of so prudent a lady as Miss Nicely.

SIR B. (R. C.) O lud! ma'am, that's the very reason twas believed at once. She has always been so cautious and so reserved, that every body was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

MRS. C. Why, to be sure, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prudent lady of her stamp, as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions. But there is a sort of puny sickly reputation, that is always ailing, yet will outlive the robuster characters of a hundred prudes.

SIR B. True, madam,—there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution; who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

MRS. C. Well, but this may be all a mistake. You know, Sir Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

CRAE. [That they do, I'll be sworn, ma'am.—Did you ever hear how Miss Piper came to lose her lover and her character last summer at Tunbridge?—Sir Benjamin, you remember it?

SIR B. Oh, to be sure!—the most whimsical circumstance.

LADY S. How was it, pray?

CRAE. Why, one evening, at Mrs. Ponto's assembly, the conversation happened to turn on the breeding Nova Scotia sheep in this country. Says a young lady in company, I have known instances of it—for Miss Letitia Piper, a first cousin of mine, had a Nova Scotia sheep that produced her twins.—What! cries the lady dowager Dundizzy (who you know is as deaf as a post), has Miss Piper had

twins?—This mistake, as you may imagine, threw the whole company into a fit of laughter. However, 'twas the next day every where reported, and in a few days believed by the whole town, that Miss Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and a girl; and in less than a week there were some people who could name the father, and the farm-house where the babies were put to nurse.

LADY S. Strange, indeed!

CRAB. Matter of fact, I assure you.—[*Crosses to Surface.*]—O lud! Mr. Surface, pray is it true that your uncle, Sir Oliver, is coming home?

JOSEPH S. (R.) Not that I know of, indeed, sir.

CRAB. [*L. of Joseph.*] He has been in the East Indies a long time. You can scarcely remember him, I believe?—Sad comfort whenever he returns, to hear how your brother has gone on!

JOSEPH S. Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure; but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

SIR B. To be sure he may: for my part, I never believed him to be so utterly void of principle as people say; and though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of by the Jews.

CRAB. That's true, egad, nephew. If the Old Jewry was a ward, I believe Charles would be an alderman:—no man more popular there, 'fore Gad! I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish tontine; and that whenever he is sick, they have prayers for the recovery of his health in all their synagogues.

SIR B. Yet no man lives in greater splendour. They tell me, when he entertains his friends he will sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities; have a score of tradesmen waiting in the antechamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

JOSEPH S. This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

MARIA. Their malice is intolerable. [*Crosses L.*] Lady

Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning : I'm not very well. [Exit Maria, L.]

Mrs. C. O dear! she changes colour very much.

LADY S. Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her : she may want your assistance.

Mrs. C. That I will, with all my soul, ma'am.—Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be!

[Exit Mrs. Candour, L.]

LADY S. 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

SIR B. The young lady's *penchant* is obvious.

CRAB. But Benjamin, you must not give up the pursuit for that : follow her, and put her into good humour. Repeat her some of your own verses. Come, I'll assist you.

SIR B. [*Crosses to Surface.*] Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you; but depend on't your brother is utterly undone. [Crosses, L.]

CRAB. [*Crosses to Surface.*] O lud, aye! undone as ever man was.—Can't raise a guinea! [Crosses, L.]

SIR B. [*Crosses to Surface.*] And every thing sold, I'm told, that was moveable.— [Crosses, L.]

CRAB. [*Crosses, c.*] I have seen one that was at his house.—Not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked, and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscots— [Crosses, L.]

SIR B. [*Crosses, c.*] And I'm very sorry, also, to hear some bad stories against him. [Going, L.]

CRAB. Oh! he ~~has~~ done many mean things, that's certain.

SIR B. But, however, as he is your brother—

[Going, L.]

CRAB. We'll tell you all another opportunity.

[Exeunt Crabtree and Sir Benjamin, L.]

LADY S. Ha! ha! 'tis very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

JOSEPH S. And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than Maria.

LADY S. I doubt her affections are further engaged than we imagine. But the family are to be here this evening,

so you may as well dine where you are, and we shall have an opportunity of observing farther; in the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief, and you shall study sentiment.

[*Exeunt, R.*

SCENE II.—*Sir Peter's House.*

Enter SIR PETER, L.

SIR P. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since. We 'tist a little going to church, and came to a quarrel before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost all comfort in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country, who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown, nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race ball. Yet she now plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of fashion and the town, with as ready a grace as if she had never seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square! I am sneered at by all my acquaintance; and paragraphed in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours; yet, the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.

Enter ROWLEY, R.

ROWLEY. O! Sir Peter, your servant: how is it with you, sir?

SIR P. (L.) Very bad, master Rowley, very bad I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.

ROWLEY. (R.) What can have happened since yesterday?

SIR P. A good question to a married man!

ROWLEY. Nay, I'm sure, Sir Peter, your lady cannot be the cause of your uneasiness.

SIR P. Why, has any body told you she was dead?

ROWLEY. Come, come, Sir Peter, you love her, notwithstanding your tempers don't exactly agree.

SIR P. But the fault is entirely hers, master Rowley. I am, myself, the sweetest tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper : and so I tell her a hundred times a day.

ROWLEY. Indeed!

SIR. P. Ay! and what is very extraordinary, in all our disputes she is always in the wrong! But Lady Sneerwell, and the set she meets at her house, encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then, to complete my vexation, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel too, and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband; meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his profligate brother.

ROWLEY. You know, sir, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen. I only wish you may not be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on't! he will retrieve his errors yet. Their worthy father, once my honoured master, was, at his years, nearly as wild a spark; yet, when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

SIR P. You are wrong, Master Rowley. On their father's death, you know; I acted as a kind of guardian to them both, till their uncle Sir Oliver's eastern liberality gave them an early independence : of course, no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts, and I was never mistaken in my life. Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment, and acts up to the sentiments he professes; but for the other, take my word for't, if he had any grain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.

✓ ROWLEY. I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man, because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.

SIR P. What! let me hear.

ROWLEY. Sir Oliver is arrived, and at this moment in town.

SIR P. How! you astonish me! I thought you did not expect him this month.

ROWLEY. I did not; but his passage has been remarkably quick.

SIR P. Egad, I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis sixteen years since we met.—We have had many a day together :—but does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival?

ROWLEY. Most strictly. He means, before it is known, to make some trial of their dispositions.

SIR P. Ah! there needs no art to discover their merits—however, he shall have his way : but, pray, does he know I am married?

ROWLEY. Yes, and will soon wish you joy.

SIR P. What, as we drink health to a friend in a consumption. Ah! Oliver will laugh at me. We used to rail at matrimony together : but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be at my house, though!—I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.

ROWLEY. By no means.

SIR P. For I should never be able to stand Noll's jokes ; so I'd have him think, Lord forgive me! that we are a very happy couple.

ROWLEY. I understand you:—but then you must be very careful not to differ while he is in the house with you.

SIR P. Egad, and so we must—and that's impossible. Ah! master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves—no—the crime carries its punishment along with it.

[*Exeunt Rowley, R. Sir Peter, L.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Sir Peter's House**Enter LADY TEAZLE AND SIR PETER, L.*

SIR P. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it!

LADY T. (R.) Sir Peter, Peter, you may bear it or not, as you please; but I ought to have my own way in every thing; and what's more, I will too. What, though I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married.

SIR P. (L.) Very well, ma'am, very well;—so a husband is to have no influence, no authority?

LADY T. Authority! No, to be sure:—if you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me: I am sure you were old enough.

SIR P. Old enough!—ay—there it is. Well, well, Lady Teazle, though my life may be made unhappy by your temper, I'll not be ruined by your extravagance.

LADY T. My extravagance! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

SIR P. No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more sums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife! to spend as much to furnish your dressing-room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon into a green-house, and give a fête champêtre at Christmas.

LADY E. Lord, Sir Peter, am I to blame, because flowers are dear in cold weather? You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part, I'm sure, I wish it was spring all the year round, and that roses grew under our feet!

SIR P. Oons! madam—if you had been born to this, I shouldn't wonder at your talking thus; but you forget what your situation was when I married you.

LADY T. No; no, I don't; 'twas a very disagreeable one, or I should never have married you.

SIR P. Yes, yes, madam, you were then in somewhat a humbler style:—the daughter of a plain country squire.

Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I saw you first sitting at your tambour, in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at your side; your hair combed smooth over a roll, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted, of your own working.

LADY T. O, yes! I remember it very well, and a curious life I led.—My daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt book,—and comb my aunt Deborah's lap-dog.

SIR P. Yes, yes, ma'am, 'twas so indeed.

LADY T. And then, you know, my evening amusements! To draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up; to play Pope Joan with the curate, to read a novel to my aunt; or to be stuck down to an old spinet to strum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

[Crosses. L.]

SIR P. (R.) I am glad you have so good a memory. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from; but now you must have your coach—vis-à-vis—and three powdered footmen before your chair; and, in the summer, a pair of white cats to draw you to Kensington-gardens. No recollection, I suppose, when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a dock'd coach-horse.

LADY T. (L.) No—I swear I never did that: I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

SIR P. This, madam, was your situation; and what have I done for you? I have made you a woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank; in short, I have made you my wife.

LADY T. Well, then,—and there is but one thing more you can make me to add to the obligation, and that is——

SIR P. My widow, I suppose?

LADY T. Hem! hem!

SIR P. I thank you, madam—but don't flatter yourself; for though your ill conduct may disturb my peace of mind, it shall never break my heart, I promise you: however, I am equally obliged to you for the hint. [Crosses, L.]

LADY T. (R.) Then why will you endeavour to make yourself so disagreeable to me, and thwart me in every little elegant expense?

SIR P. (L.) 'Slife, madam, I say, had you any o these elegant expenses when you married me?

LADY T. Lud, Sir Peter! would you have me be out of the fashion?

SIR P. The fashion, indeed! What had you to do with the fashion before you married me?

LADY T. For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste.

SIR P. Ay—there again—taste—Zounds? madam, you had no taste when you married me!

LADY T. That's very true, indeed, Sir Peter; and after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again, I allow. But now, Sir Peter, since we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's.

SIR P. Ay, there's another precious circumstance—a charming set of acquaintance you have made there.

LADY T. Nay, Sir Peter, they are all people of rank and fortune, an remarkably tenacious of reputation.

SIR P. Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance: for they don't choose any body should have a character but themselves!—Such a crew! Ah! many a wretch has rid on a hurdle who has done less mischief than these utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

LADY T. What! would you restrain the freedom of speech!

SIR P. Ah! they have made you just as bad as any one of the society.

LADY T. Why, I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace.

SIR P. Grace indeed!

LADY T. But I know I bear no malice against the people I abuse.—When I say an ill-natured thing, 'tis out of pure good humour: and I take it for granted, they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's too.

SIR P. Well, well, I'll call in just to look after my own character.

LADY T. Then indeed you must make haste ~~aer~~ me, or you'll be too late. So, good bye to ye.

[*Exit Lady Teale, R.*]

SIR P. So—I have gain'd much by my intended exposition: yet, with what a charming air she contradicts every thing I say, and how pleasingly she shows her contempt for my authority! Well, though I can't make her love me, there is great satisfaction in quarrelling with her; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing every thing in her power to plague me.

Exit, L.

SCENE II.—*Lady Sneerwell's House.—Company sitting at the back of the stage at Card Tables.*

LADY SNEERWELL, MRS. CANDOUR, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, and JOSEPH SURFACE, *discovered; Servants attending with Tea, etc.*

LADY S. (L.) Nay, positively, we will hear it.

JOSEPH S. Yes, yes, the epigram, by all means.

SIR B. O plague on't, uncle! 'tis more nonsense.

CRAB. No, No; 'fore Gad, very clever for an extempore!

SIR B. (R. C.) But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstance. You must know, that one day last week, as Lady Betty Curricke was taking the dust in Hyde Park, in a sort of duodecimo phaeton, she desired me to write some verses on her ponies; upon which I took out my pocket-book, and in one moment produced the following.

Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies;
Other horses are clowns, but these macaronies:
To give them this title I'm sure is not wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

CRAB. There, ladies, done in the smack of a whip, and on horseback too.

JOSEPH S. (R.) A very Phœbus, mounted—indeed, Sir Benjamin.

SIR B. O dear, sir! trifles—trifles.

Enter MARIA and LADY TEAZLE. L.

Mrs. C. I must have a copy.

LADY S. Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir Peter?

LADY T. I believe he'll wait on your ladyship presently.

LADY S. Maria, my dear, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet with Mr. Surface.

MARIA. I take very little pleasure in cards, however, I'll do as your ladyship pleases.

[*Retires up centre, with Lady Sneerwell and Surface.*]

LADY T. I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me, before Sir Peter came. [*Aside.*

Mrs. C. [*They all advance.*] Now, I'll die, but you are so scandalous, I'll forswear your society.

LADY T. What's the matter, Mrs. Candour?

Mrs. C. They'll not allow our friend Miss Vermillion to be handsome.

LADY S. [*Comes down, L.*] O, surely, she is a pretty woman.

CRAE. I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

Mrs. C. She has a charming fresh colour.

LADY T. [*Crosses, c.*] Yes, when it is fresh put on.

Mrs. C. O fie! I'll swear her colour is natural: I have seen it come and go.

LADY T. I dare swear you have, ma'am: it goes off at night, and comes again in the morning.

✓ Mrs. C. Ha! ha! ha! how I hate to hear you talk so! But surely now, her sister *is*, or *was*, very handsome.

CRAE. Who? Mrs. Evergreen? O Lord! she's six and fifty if she's an hour!

Mrs. C. Now positively you wrong her; fifty-two or fifty-three is the utmost, and I don't think she looks more.

SIR B. (R. C.) Ah! there's no judging by her looks, unless one could see her face.

LADY S. (L.) Well, well, if Mrs. Evergreen does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow Ochre caulks her wrinkles.

SIR B. Nay, now, Lady Sneerwell, you are severe upon the widow. Come, come, 'tis not that she paints so ill—but when she has finished her face, she joins it on so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur may see at once that the head is modern, though the trunk's antique.

CRAB. Ha! ha! ha! Well said, nephew!

[*Servants give the Characters coffee, etc. and wait behind.*]

MRS. C. Ha! ha! ha! Well, you make me laugh; but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of Miss Simper?

SIR B. Why she has very pretty teeth.

LADY T. Yes, and on that account, when she is neither speaking or laughing (which very seldom happens), she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always on a jar, as it were,—thus. [*Shows her teeth.*]

MRS. C. How can you be so ill-natured?

LADY T. Nay, I allow even that's better than the pains Mrs. Prim takes to conceal her losses in front. She draws her mouth till it positively resembles the aperture of a poor's box, and all her words appear to slide out edge-wise, as it were,—thus—*How do you do, madam? Yes, madam.* [*Mimics.*]

LADY S. Very well, Lady Teazle; I see you can be a little severe.

LADY T. In defence of a friend it is but justice. But here comes Sir Peter to spoil our pleasantry.

[*Crosses to Sir Benjamin.*]

✓

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE, L.

SIR P. Ladies, your most obedient. Mercy on me! here's the whole set! a character dead at every word, I suppose. [*Aside.*]

MRS. C. I am rejoiced you are come, Sir Peter. They have been so censorious—they'll allow good qualities to nobody.

SIR P. That must be very distressing to you, indeed, Mrs. Candour.

MRS. C. Not even good nature to our friend Mrs. Pursy.

LADY T. What, the fat dowager who was at Mrs. Quadrilles, last night?

MRS. C. Nay, but her bulk is her misfortune; and when she takes such pains on her.

LADY S. That's very true, indeed.

LADY T. Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey; laces herself by pulleys, and often in the hottest noon in summer, you may see her on a little squat poney, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's, and puffing round the Ring on a full trot.

MRS. C. I thank you, Lady Treazle, for defending her.

SIR P. Yes, a good defence, truly!

MRS. C. But, Sir Benjamin is as censorious as Miss Sallow.

CRAB. Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious — an awkward grawky, without any one good point under heaven.

MRS. C. Positively, you shall not be so very severe. Miss Sallow is a near relation of mine by marriage, and as for her person { great allowance is to be made } for, let me tell you, a woman labours under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl at six and thirty.

LADY S. Though, surely, she is handsome still—and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candlelight, it is not to be wondered at.

MRS. C. True, and then as to her manner; upon my word, I think it is particularly graceful, considering she never had the least education: for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristol.

SIR B. Ah! you are both of you too good-natured!

SIR P. Yes, damned good-natured! This their own relation! mercy on me!

[*Aside.*]

SIR B. And Mrs. Candour is of so moral a turn.

MRS. C. Well, I will never join in ridiculing a friend; and so I constantly tell my cousin Ogle; and you all know what pretensions she has to be critical on beauty.

CRAB. O to be sure! she has herself the oddest counte-

nance that ever was seen, 'tis a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

SIR B. So she has, indeed—an Irish front—

CRAB. Caledonian locks—

SIR B. Dutch nose—

CRAB. Austrian lips—

SIR B. Complexion of a Spaniard—

CRAB. And teeth *à la Chinois*—

SIR B. In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa—where no two guests are of a nation—

CRAB. Or a congress at the close of a general war—wherein all the members, even to her eyes, appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

MRS. C. Ha! ha! ha!

SIR P. Mercy on my life!—a person they dine with twice a week. [Aside.]

MRS. C. Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so—for, give me leave to say, that Mrs. Ogle—

SIR P. [*Crosses to Mrs. Candour.*] Madam, madam, I beg your pardon—there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues. But when I tell you, Mrs. Candour, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part. [*Mrs. Candour turns up stage.*]

LADY S. Ha! ha! ha! Well said, Sir Peter! but you are a cruel creature,—too phlegmatic yourself for a jest, and too peevish to allow wit in others.

SIR P. Ah! madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good-nature than your ladyship is aware of.

LADY T. True, Sir Peter; I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

SIR B. Or rather, suppose them man and wife, because one so seldom sees them together.

LADY T. But Sir Peter is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

SIR P. 'Fore heaven, madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for the preservation of fame, as well as game, I believe many would thank them for the bill.

LADY S. O Lud ! Sir Peter , would you deprive us of our privileges?

SIR P. Ay , madam ; and then no person should be permitted to kill characters and run down reputations , but qualified old maids and disappointed widows ,

LADY S. Go , you monster !

MRS. C. But , surely , you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear ?

SIR P. Yes , madam , I would have law merchant for them too ; and in all cases of slander currency , whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found , the injured parties should have a right to come on any of the indorsers ,

[*Servant enters L. and whispers Sir Peter.*

CRAB. Well , for my part , I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation .

LADY S. Come , ladies , shall we sit down to cards in the next room ?

SIR P. [*To the Servant.*] I'll be with them directly . — I'll get away unperceived . [*Apart.*] [*Exit Servant , L.*

LADY S. Sir Peter , you are not going to leave us ?

SIR P. Your ladyship must excuse me ; I'm called away by particular business . But I leave my character behind me . [*Exit Sir Peter , L.*

SIR B. Well—certainly , Lady Teazle , that lord of yours is a strange being : I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily , if he were not your husband .

LADY T. O , pray don't mind that ;—why don't you ?—come , do let's hear them . [*Joins the rest of the company going into the next room L. v. E. Surface and Maria advance.*

JOSEPH S. Maria , I see you have no satisfaction in this society .

MARIA. (L.) How is it possible I should ?—If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us , be the province of wit or humour , Heaven grant me a double portion of dulness !

JOSEPH S. (R.) Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are ,—they have no malice at heart .

MARIA. Then is their conduct still more contemptible ;

for, in my opinion, nothing could excuse the intemperance of their tongues, but a natural and uncontrollable bitterness of mind.

JOSEPH S. But can you, Maria, feel thus for others, and be unkind to me alone?—Is hope to be denied the tenderest passion?

MARIA, Why will you distress me by renewing this subject?

JOSEPH S. Ah, Maria! you would not treat me thus, and oppose your guardian, Sir Peter's will, but that I see that profligate Charles is still a favoured rival.

MARIA, Ungenerously urged!—But whatever my sentiments are for that unfortunate young man, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up, because his distresses have lost him the regard even of a brother.

[Crosses, R.]

JOSEPH S. (L.) Nay, but Maria, do not leave me with a frown: by all that's honest, I swear. Gad's life, here's Lady Teazle!—[Aside.]—You must not—no, you shall not—for, though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle—

MARIA. Lady Teazle!

JOSEPH S. Yet, were Sir Peter to suspect—

Enter LADY TEAZLE, L. U. E. and comes forward, c.

LADY T. What is this, pray? Does he take her for me?—Child, you are wanted in the next room.—[Exit MARIA, L. U. E.]—What is all this, pray?

JOSEPH S. (L.) O, the most unlucky circumstance in nature! Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness, and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions, and I was just endeavouring to reason with her when you came in.

LADY T. Indeed! but you seemed to adopt a very tender method of reasoning—do you usually argue on your knees?

JOSEPH S. O, she's a child, and I thought a little bombast—But, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library, as you promised?

LADY T. No, no; I begin to think it would be imprudent, and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

JOSEPH S. True—a mere platonic cicisbeo—what every London wife is entitled to.

LADY T. Certainly, one must not be out of the fashion. However, I have so many of my country prejudices left, that, though Sir Peter's ill-humour may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to—

JOSEPH S. The only revenge in your power. Well—I applaud your moderation.

LADY T. Go—you are an insinuating wretch. [*Crosses, L.*]—But we shall be missed—let us join the company.

JOSEPH S. But we had best not return together.

LADY T. Well—don't stay; for Maria sha'n't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you.

[*Exit Lady Teazle, L. U. E.*

JOSEPH S. A curious dilemma, truly, my politics have run me into! I wanted, at first, only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle, that she might not be my enemy with Maria; and I have, I don't know how, become her serious lover. Sincerely, I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many damn'd rogueries, that I doubt I shall be exposed at last.

[*Exit, R.*

SCENE III.—*Sir Peter Teazle's.*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE and ROWLEY L.

SIR O. (R.) Ha! ha! ha! So my old friend is married, hey?—a young wife out of the country,—Ha! ha! ha, That he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long, and sink into a husband at last.

Row. (L.) But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver: 'tis a tender point, I assure you, though he has been married only seven months.

SIR O. Then he has been just half a year on the stool of repentance!—Poor Peter!—But you say he has entirely given up Charles,—never sees him, hey?

Row. His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure, greatly increased by a jealousy of him with Lady

Teazle, which he has been industriously led into by a scandalous society in the neighbourhood, who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas, the truth is, I believe, if the lady is partial to either of them, his brother is the favourite.

SIR O. (R.) Ay, I know there are a set of malicious, prating prudent grossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time; and will rob a young fellow of his good name, before he has years to know the value of it.—But I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you.—No, no,—if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

Row (L). Then, my life on't, you will reclaim him——Ah, sir! it gives me new life to find that *your* heart is not turned against him; and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

SIR O. What, shall I forget, Master Rowley, when I was at his years myself?—Egad, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths; and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was.

Row. Sir, 'tis this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family.—But here comes Sir Peter. *[Goes a little up.]*

SIR O. Egad, so he does.—Mercy on me!—he's greatly altered—and seems to have a settled married look! One

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE, R.

SIR P. (R.) Hah! Sir Oliver—my old friend! Welcome to England a thousand times!

SIR O. (C.) Thank you—thank you, Sir Peter! and 'faith I am glad to find you well, believe me.

SIR P. (R.) Oh! 'tis a long time since we met—fifteen years, I doubt, Sir Oliver, and many a cross accident in the time.

SIR O. Ay, I have had my share.—But, what! I find you are married, hey, my old boy?—Well, well—it can't be helped—and so—I wish you joy with all my heart.

SIR P. Thank you, thank you, Sir Oliver.—Yes, I have

entered into—the happy state;—but we'll not talk of that now.

SIR O. True, true, Sir Peter; old friends should not begin on grievances at first meeting—no, no, no.—

Row. (L.) Take care, pray, sir.—

SIR O. Well—so one of my nephews is a wild rogue, I find, hey?

SIR P. Wild!—Ah! my old friend, I grieve for your disappointment there; he's a lost young man, indeed. However, his brother will make you amends; Joseph is, indeed, what a youth should be. Every body in the world speaks well of him.

SIR O. I am sorry to hear it; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Every body speaks well of him!—Pshaw! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.

SIR P. What, Sir Oliver! do you blame him for not making enemies?

SIR O. Yes, if he has merit enough to deserve them.

SIR P. Well, well—you'll be convinced when you know him. 'Tis edification to hear him converse, he professes the noblest sentiments.

SIR O. Oh! plague of his sentiments! If he salutes me with a scrap of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly.—But, however, don't mistake me, Sir Peter; I don't mean to defend Charles's errors: but before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts; and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose.

Row. And Sir Peter shall own for once he has been mistaken.

SIR P. Oh! my life on Joseph's honour.

SIR O. Well—come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lads' health, and tell you our scheme.

[Crosses, R.]

SIR P. *Allons* then!

SIR O. And don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son. Odds my life! I am not sorry that he has run out of the course a little: for my part, I hate to

see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth ; 'tis like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree. [*Exeunt*, R.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Sir Peter Teazle's.*

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE, SIR PETER TEAZLE, and ROWLEY, R.

SIR P. (C.) Well, then, we will see this fellow first, and have our wine afterwards :—but how is this, master

SIR P. (C.) Well, then, we will see this fellow first, and have our wine afterwards :—but how is this, master Rowley ? I don't see the jet of your scheme.

Row. (R.) Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley, whom I was speaking of, is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes. He has applied, by letter, since his confinement, both to Mr. Surface and Charles; from the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do; and he is, at this time, endeavouring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley.

SIR O. (L.) Ah! he is my brother's son.

SIR P. Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to—

Row. Why, sir I will inform Charles and his brother, that Stanley has obtained permission to apply personally to his friends, and as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character, and he will have a fair opportunity of judging, at least, of the benevolence of their dispositions; and believe me, sir, you will find in the youngest brother, one, who, in the midst of folly and dissipation, has still, as our immortal bard expresses it,—“ a heart to pity, and a hand, open as day, for melting charity. ”

SIR P. Pshaw! What signifies his having an open hand

or purse either, when he has nothing left to give? Well, well—make the trial, if you please. But where is the fellow whom you brought for Sir Oliver to examine, relative to Charles's affairs?

Row. Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence. This, Sir Oliver, is a friendly Jew, who, to do him justice, has done every thing in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance.

— SIR P. Pray let us have him in.

Row. Desire Mr. Moses to walk up stairs.

SIR P. But, pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth?

Row. Oh! I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles, but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his own interests: I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I have detected in a matter little short of forgery, and shall shortly produce to remove some of your prejudices, Sir Peter, relative to Charles and Lady Teazle.

SIR P. I have heard too much on that subject.

Row. Here comes the honest Israelite.—

Enter MOSES, R.

This is Sir Oliver.

SIR O. Sir, I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew, Charles.

MOSES. [*Crosses to Sir O.*] Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him; but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

SIR O. That was unlucky, truly; for you have had no opportunity of showing your talents.

MOSES. None at all; I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

SIR O. Unfortunate, indeed!—But I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses?

MOSES. Yes, he knows that;—this very evening I was to

have brought him a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will, I believe, advance him some money.

SIR P. What,—one, Charles never had money from before?

MOSES. Yes—Mr. Premium, of Crutched Friars, formerly a broker.

SIR P. Egad, Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me!—Charles, you say, does not know Mr. Premium?

MOSES. Not at all.

—SIR P. Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation: go with my friend Moses, and represent Premium, and then, I'll answer for it, you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

SIR O. Egad, I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

SIR P. True—so you may.

Row. Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure;—however, Moses, you understand Sir Peter, and will be faithful?

MOSES. You may depend upon me; [*Looks at his watch.*] this is near the time I was to have gone. [*Crosses L.*]

SIR O. I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses——But hold! I have forgot one thing—how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

MOSES. There's no need—the principal is a Christian.

SIR O. Is he? I'm very sorry to hear it. But then again, an't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a money lender?

SIR P. Not at all; 'twould not be out of character, if you went in your own carriage,—would it, Moses?

MOSES. Not in the least.

SIR O. Well—but how must I talk?—there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

SIR P. O! there's not much to learn. The great point, as I take it, is to be exorbitant enough in your demands—hey, Moses?

MOSES. Yes, that's a very great point.

SIR O. I'll answer for't I'll not be wanting in that. I'll ask him eight or ten per cent on the loan at least.

MOSES. If you ask him no more than that, you'll be discovered immediately.

SIR O. Hey!—what the plague!—how much then?

MOSES. That depends upon the circumstances. If he appears not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent.; but if you find him in great distress, and want the monies very bad, you may ask double.

SIR P. A good honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver!

— SIR O. Truly, I think so—and not unprofitable.

MOSES. Then, you know, you hav'n't the monies yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him of a friend.

SIR O. Oh! I borrow it of a friend, do I?

MOSES. Yes; and your friend is an unconscionable dog: but you can't help that.

SIR O. My friend an unconscionable dog, is he?

MOSES. Yes, and he himself has not the monies by him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

SIR O. He is forced to sell stock at a great loss, is he? Well, that's very kind of him.

SIR P. Faith, Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium, I mean,—you'll soon be master of the trade.

SIR O. Moses shall give me farther instructions as we go together.

SIR P. You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by.

SIR O. O! never fear: my tutor appears so able, that though Charles lived in the nex street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner.

[*Exeunt Sir Oliver Surface and Moses, L.*]

SIR P. So, now, I think Sir Oliver will be convinced: you are partial, Rowley; and would have prepared Charles for the other plot.

Row. No, upon my word, Sir Peter.

SIR P. Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say, presently.— I see Maria, and want to speak with her. [*Exit Rowley, R.*] I should be glad to be convin-

ced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust. I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph—I am determined I will do it—he will give me his opinion sincerely.

Enter MARIA, L.

So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you?

MARIA. (L.) No, sir; he was engaged.

SIR P. (R.) Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that amiable young man, what return his partiality for you deserves?

MARIA. Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely—you compel me to declare, that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention, whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

SIR P. So—here's perverseness!—No, no, Maria, 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer. 'Tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

MARIA. 'This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in neither seeing nor corresponding with him: I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable, if, while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his distresses.

SIR P. Well, well, pity him as much as you please; but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

MARIA. Never to his brother!

[*Crosses, R.*

SIR P. Go—perverse and obstinate! but take care, madam; you have never yet known what the authority of a guardian is: don't compel me to inform you of it.

MARIA. I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will, I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute: but must cease to think you so, when you would compel me to be miserable.

[*Exit Maria. R.*

SIR P. Was ever man so crossed as I am? Every thing conspiring to fret me! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight, before her father, a hale and heart-
man, died, on purpose, I believe, for the pleasur-

inent

plaguing me with the care of his daughter. [*Lady Teazle sings without.*] But here comes my helpmate! She appears in great good humour. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but a little!

Enter LADY TEAZLE, R.

LADY T. Lud! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It is not using me well to be illhumoured when I am not by.

SIR P. (L) Ah! Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good-humoured at all times.

LADY T. (R.) I am sure I wish I had; for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment. Do be good-humoured now, and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

SIR P. Two hundred pounds! What, an't I to be in a good humour without paying for it? But speak to me thus, and i'faith there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it; [*Gives her notes*] but seal me a bond for the repayment.

LADY T. O no—there—my note of hand will do as well.
[*Offering her hand.*]

SIR P. And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement. I mean shortly to surprise you:—but shall we always live thus, hey?

LADY T. If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

SIR P. Well—then, let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

LADY T. I assure you, Sir Peter, good nature becomes you—you look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and chuck me under the chin, you would; and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow, who would deny me nothing—didn't you?

SIR P. Yes, yes, and you were as kind and attentive—

LADY T. Ay, so I was, and would always take your
wit

part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you, and turn you into ridicule.

SIR P. Indeed!

LADY T. Ay, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you, and said, I didn't think you so ugly by any means.

SIR P. Thank you.

LADY T. And I dared say you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

SIR P. And you prophesied right; and we shall now be the happiest couple—

LADY T. And never differ again?

SIR P. No, never!—Though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always begin first.

LADY T. I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter: indeed, you always gave the provocation.

SIR P. Now see, my angel! take care—contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

LADY T. Then don't you begin it, my love!

SIR P. There, now! you—you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

LADY T. Nay, you know if you will be angry without any reason, my dear—

SIR P. There! now you want to quarrel again.

LADY T. No, I am sure I don't:—but if you will be so peevish—

SIR P. There now! who begins first?

LADY T. Why you, to be sure. I said nothing; but there's no bearing your temper.

SIR P. No, no, madam: the fault's in your own temper.

LADY T. Ay, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

SIR P. Your cousin Sophy is a forward impertinent gipsy.

LADY T. You are a great bear, I'm sure, to abuse my relations.

SIR P. Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friends with you any more!

LADY T. So much the better.

SIR P. No, no, madam: 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you—a pert, rural coquette, that had refused half the honest 'squires in the neighbourhood.

LADY T. And I am sure I was a fool to marry you—an old dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty, only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

[Crosses, L.]

SIR P. Ay, ay, madam; but you were pleased enough to listen to me: you never had such an offer before.

LADY T. No! didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who every body said would have been a better match? for his estate is just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we have been married.

[Crosses, R.]

SIR P. (R.) I have done with you, madam! You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of every thing. I believe you capable of every thing that is bad.—Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam.—Yes, madam, *you* and Charles are—not without grounds—

LADY T. (R.) Take care, Sir Peter! you had better not insinuate any such thing? I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

SIR P. Very well, madam? very well? A separate maintenance as soon as you please. Yes, madam, or a divorce!—I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors.

LADY T. Agreed! agreed!—And now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple—and never differ again, you know—ha! ha! ha! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye—bye.

[Exit, R.]

SIR P. Plagues and tortures! Can't I make her angry either! Oh, I am the most miserable fellow! but I'll not

bear her presuming to keep her temper : no ! she may break my heart , but she sha'n't keep her temper. [*Exit, R.*]

SCÈNE II.—*Charles Surface's House.*

Enter TRIP, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, and MOSES, L.

TRIP. Here , master Moses ! if you'll stay a moment. I'll try whether—what's the gentleman's name ?

SIR O. Mr. Moses , what is my name ?

MOSES. Mr. Premium.

TRIP. Premium—very well. [*Exit Trip, taking snuff, R.*]

SIR O. (R.) To judge by the servants, one wouldn't believe the master was ruined. But what !—sure , this was my brother's house ?

MOSES. (L.) Yes , sir ; Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph , with the furniture , pictures , etc. just as the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a piece of extravagance in him.

SIR O. In my mind , the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

Re-enter TRIP, R.

TRIP. My master says you must wait, gentlemen : he has company, and can't speak with you yet.

SIR O. If he knew who it was wanted to see him , perhaps he would not send such a message ?

TRIP. Yes , yes , sir : he knows you are here—I did not forget little Premium : no , no , no.

SIR O. Very well ; and I pray , sir , what may be your name ?

TRIP. Trip , sir ; my name is Trip , at your service.

SIR O. Well then , Mr. Trip , you have a pleasant sort of place here , I guess ?

TRIP. Why , yes—here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough ; but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear—and not very great either—but fifty pounds a year , and find our own bags and bouquets.

[*Crosses to Moses.*]

SIR O. Bags and bouquets ! halters and bastinadoes !

[*Aside.*]

TRIP. And, *a-propos*, Moses—have you been able to get me that little bill discounted?

SIR O. Wants to raise money too!—mercy on me! Has his distresses too, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns. [Aside.

MOSES. (L.) 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr. Trip. [Gives Trip the note.

TRIP. (C.) Good lack, you surprise me! My friend Brush has indorsed it, and I thought when he put his name at the back of a bill 'twas the same as cash.

MOSES. No! 'twouldn't do.

TRIP. A small sum—but twenty pounds. Hark'ee, Moses, do you think you couldn't get it me by way of annuity?

SIR O. (R.) An annuity! ha! ha! a footman raise money by way of annuity! Well done, luxury, egad! [Aside.

MOSES. Well, but you must ensure your place.

TRIP. O with all my heart! I'll ensure my place, and my life too, if you please.

SIR O. It's more than I would your neck. [Aside.

MOSES. But is there nothing you could deposit?

TRIP. Why, nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately; [Bell rings, R.] but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes, with equity of redemption before November—or you shall have the reversion of the French velvet, or a post-obit on the blue and silver: [Bell rings R.] there, I should think, Moses, —[Bell rings, R.]—Egad, [Crosses, R.] I heard the bell! I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you. Don't forget the annuity, little Moses! This way, gentlemen. I'll insure my place, you know.

SIR O. If the man be a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed! [Exeunt, R.

SCENE III.—*Antique Hall.* —

CHARLES SURFACE, CARELESS, SIR HARRY, *etc.* at a table, with wine, *etc.*

CHARLES S. [Seated at the head of the table.] 'Fore heaven,

'tis true!—there's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness; but, plague on't, they won't drink wine.

CARE. [*Seated R of table.*] It is so indeed, Charles! they give into all the substantial luxuries of the table, and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. O, certainly society suffers by it intolerably: for now, instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy, their conversation is become just like the Spa water they drink, which has all the pertness and flatulency of Champagne, without its spirit or flavour.

SIR H. [*Seated L. of table.*] But what are they to do who love play better than wine?

CARE. True: there's Sir Harry diets himself for gaming, and is now under a hazard regimen.

CHARLES. Then he'll have the worst of it. What! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn? For my part, egad, I am never so successful as when I am a little merry: let me throw on a bottle of Champagne, and I never lose.

ALL. Hey, what?

CHARLES S. At least, I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing.

CARE. Ay, that I believe.

CHARLES S. And then, what man can pretend to be a believer in love, who is an abjurer of wine? 'Tis the test by which the lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats at the top is the maid that has bewitched you.

CARE. Now then, Charles, be honest, and give us your real favourite.

CHARLES S. Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you. If I toast her, you must give a round of her peers, which is impossible—on earth.

CARE. Oh! then we'll find some canonized vestals, or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant!

CHARLES S. Here then, bumpers, you rogues! bumpers! Maria! Maria! —

SIR H. Maria who?

CHARLES S. O damn the surname—'tis too formal to be registered in Love's calendar;—Maria!

ALL. Maria!

[*They drink.*]

CHARLES S. But now, Sir Harry, beware we must have beauty superlative.

CARE. Nay, never study, Sir Harry: we'll stand to the toast, though your mistress should want an eye, and you know you have a song will excuse you.

SIR H. Egad, so I have! and I'll give him the song, instead of the lady.

SONG.

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;

Here's to the widow of fifty;

Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,

And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.

Chorus. Let the toast pass,—

Drink to the lass,

I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;

Now to the maid who has none, sir:

Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,

And here's to the nymph with but *ane*, sir.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, etc.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow;

Now to her that's as brown as a berry:

Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,

And now to the damsel that's merry.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, etc.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,

Young or ancient, I care not a feather;

So fill up your glasses, nay, fill to the brim,

And let us e'en toast them together.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, etc.

ALL. Bravo! Bravo!

Enter TRIP, R., and whispers CHARLES SURFACE.

CHARLES S. Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little.

Careless, take the clâir, will you? [*Rises, and comes forward* R.]

CARE. [*Rises and comes down, L.*] Nay, prithee, Charles, what now? This is one of your peerless beauties, I suppose, has dropt in by chance?

CHARLES S. No, faith! To tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker, who are come by appointment.

CARE O damn it! let's have the Jew in.

SIR H. Ay, the broker too, by all means.

CARE, Yes, yes, the Jew and the broker.

CHARLES S. Egad, with all my heart! Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in—[*Exit Trip, R.*—though there's one of them a stranger, I can assure you.

CARE. Charles, let us give them some generous Burgundy, and perhaps they'll grow conscientious.

CHARLES S. O hang'em, no! wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities; and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

Enter TRIP, MOSES, and SIR OLIVER SURFACE, R.

They cross to L.

CHARLES S. So, honest Moses, walk in : walk in, pray, Mr. Premium—that's the gentleman's name! isn't it, Moses?

MOSES. Yes, sir

CHARLES S. Set chairs, Trip—sit down, Mr. Premium—glasses. Trip—sit down, Moses. [*They sit to L.*] Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment, here's *Success to usury!*—Moses, fill the gentleman a bumper.

MOSES *Success to usury!*

CARE. Right, Moses—usury is prudence and industry, and deserves to succeed.

SIR O. Then—*here's all the success it deserves.*

CARE. [*Rising, and coming forward.*] No, no, that won't do! Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast, and must drink it in a pint bumper

SIR H. A pint bumper, at least.

MOSES. O pray, sir, consider—Mr. Premium's a gentleman.

CARE. And therefore loves good wine.

SIR H. Give Moses a quart glass--this is mutiny, and a high contempt for the chair.

CHARLES S. No, hang it, you shan't! Mr. Premium's a stranger.

CARE. Plague on 'em then!—if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the dice are in the next room—Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen?

CHARLES S. I will! I will! [*Exeunt all the Gentlemen, R.*] Careless!

CARE. [*Returning.*] Well!

CHARLES S. Perhaps I may want you.

CARE. O, you know I am always ready: word, note, or bond, 'tis all the same to me. [*Exit; R.*]

MOSES. Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honour and secresy; and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is—

CHARLES S. [*Putting Moses across to L.*] Pshaw! have done.—Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression: he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this I am an extravagant young fellow, who want money to borrow—you I take to be a prudent old fellow, who has got money to lend.—I am blockhead enough to give fifty per cent, sooner than not have it; and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. Now, sir, you see we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without farther ceremony.

SIR O. Exceeding frank, upon my word.—I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

CHARLES S. Oh no, sir; plain dealing in business I always think best.

SIR O. Sir, I like you the better for it—however, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend; but then he's

an unconscionable dog; isn't he, Moses? And must sell stock to accommodate you—must'n't he, Moses?

MOSES. Yes, indeed! You know I always speak the truth, and scorn to tell a lie!

CHARLES S. Right. People that speak truth generally do: but these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't!

SIR O. Well—but what security could you give? You have no land, I suppose?

CHARLES S. Not a mole-hill, nor a twig, but what's in the bough-pots out of the window!

SIR O. Nor any stock, I presume?

CHARLES S. Nothing but live stock—and that's only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connexions?

SIR O. Why, to say truth, I am.

CHARLES S. Then you must know that I have a devilish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations.

SIR O. That you have a wealthy uncle I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out, is more, I believe, than you can tell.

CHARLES S. O no!—there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favourite, and that he talks of leaving me every thing.

SIR O. Indeed! this is the first I've heard of it.

CHARLES S. Yes, yes, 'tis just so—Moses knows 'tis true, don't you, Moses?

SIR O. Egad, they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal. [Aside.]

CHARLES S. Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it's agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life; though at the same time, the old fellow has been so liberal to me, that I give you my word, I should be very sorry to hear any thing had happened to him.

SIR O. Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could offer me—for I might live to a hundred, and never see the principal.

CHARLES S. O, yes, you would—the moment Sir Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

SIR O. Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome du n you ever had in your life.

CHARLES S. What! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life?

SIR O. No, indeed, I am not; though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in Christendom.

CHARLES S. There again, now you are misinformed. No, Oliver! Yes, yes, he breaks apace, I'm told—and is so much altered lately, that his nearest relations would not know him!

SIR O. No! Ha! ha! ha! so much altered lately, that his nearest relations would not know him! ha! ha! ha! egad—Ha! ha! ha!

CHARLES S. Ha! ha!—you're glad to hear that, little Premium?

SIR O. No, no, I'm not.

CHARLES S. Yes, yes, you are—ha! ha! ha!—You know that mends your chance.

SIR O. But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over?—nay, some say he is actually arrived?

CHARLES S. Pshaw! Sure I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no; rely on't, lie's at this moment at Calcutta—is'nt he, Moses?

MOSES. O yes, certainly.

SIR O. Very true, as you say, you must know better than I, though I have it from pretty good authority—hav'n't I, Moses?

MOSES. (L.) Yes, most undoubted!

SIR O. (R.) But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately—is there nothing you could dispose of?

CHARLES S. (C.) How do you mean?

SIR O. For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate?

CHARLES S. O Lud!—that's gone long ago.—Moses can tell you how better than I can.

SIR O. Good lack! all the family race cups and corporation bowls. [*Aside.*—Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and complete.

CHARLES S. Yes, yes, so it was—vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself. [*Crosses R.*

SIR O. (c.) Mercy upon me! Learning that had run in the family like an heir-loom! [*Aside.*] Pray, what are become of the books?

CHARLES S. (R.) You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

MOSES. I know nothing of books.

SIR O. So, so nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

CHARLES S. Not much indeed; unless you have a mind to the family pictures, I have got a roomfull of ancestors above, and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad, you shall have'em a bargain.

SIR O. Hey! what the devil! Sure, you would'nt sell your forefathers, would you?

CHARLES S. Every man of them, to the best bidder.

SIR O. What! your great uncles and aunts?

CHARLES S. Ay, and my great grandfathers and grandmothers too.

SIR O. Now I give him up. [*Aside.*] What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred! Odd's life, do you take me for Shilock in the play, that you would raise money of me on your own flesh and blood?

CHARLES S. Nay, my little broker, don't be angry: what need you care if you have your money's worth.

SIR O. Well, I'll be the purchaser: I think I can dispose of the family canvass. Oh, I'll never forgive him this! never!

[*Aside.*

Enter CARELESS, R.

CARE. Come, Charles, what keeps you?

CHARLES S. I can't come yet : i'faith , we are going to have a sale above stairs ; here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors.

CARE. O, burn your ancestors!

CHARLES S. No, he may do that afterwards, if he pleases. Stay, Careless, we want you : egad , you shall be auctioneer ; so come along with us. [Crosses, L.

CARE. Oh , have with you , if that's the case. I can handle a hammer as well as a dice-box ! Going ! going !

SIR O. Oh , the profligates ! [Aside:

CHARLES S. Come, Moses , you shall be appraiser, if we want one. Gad's life, little Premium , you don't seem to like the business?

SIR O. O yes, I do vastly. Ha ! ha ! ha ! yes , yes , I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction—ha ! ha !—O the prodigal ! [Aside.

CHARLES S. To be sure ! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations?

SIR O. I'll never forgive him ; never ! never ! [Exeunt. L.

ACT. IV.

SCENE I.—*Picture Room at Charles's.*—*Large chair on L.*

2nd. E.—*Family Pedigree hanging up in the Wing R.*

*Enter CHARLES SURFACE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE,
MOSES, and CARELESS L.*

CHARLES S. (R.) Walk in, gentlemen ; pray walk in—he-re they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the conquest.

SIR O. (R. C.) And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

CHARLES S. Ay, ay, these are done in the true spirit of portrait-painting ;—no *volontier grace* or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you ; so that you may sink the original, and not hurt the picture. No , no ; the merit of these

is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

SIR O. Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

CHARLES S. I hope not.—Well you see master Premium what a domestic character I am : here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family.—But, come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose. [*Brings chair forward, c.*

CARE. Ay, ay, this will do.—But, Charles, I hav'n't a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

CHARLES S. Egad, that's true; [*Taking pedigree down from R. 1st. w.*] what parchment have we here?—O, our genealogy in full. Here, Careless,—you shall have no common bit of mahogany; here's the family tree for you, you rogue,—this shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

SIR O. (L.) What an unnatural rogue!—an *ex post facto* parricide! [*Aside.*]

CARE. Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation indeed; faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill not only serve as a hammer, but a catalogue into the bargain.—Come, begin—A-going, a-going, a-going!

CHARLES S. Bravo, Careless!—Well, here's my great uncle, Sir Richard Raveline, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet.—What say you, Mr. Premium?—look at him—there's a hero, not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipt captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be.—What do you bid?

SIR O. [*Aside to Moses.*] Bid him speak.

MOSES. Mr. Premium would have you speak.

CHARLES S. Why, then, he shall have him for ten ponds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

SIR O. Heaven deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds! [*Aside.*]—Very well, sir I take him at that.

CHARLES S. Careless, knock down my uncle Richard.—Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great aunt Deborah, done by Kneller in his best manner, and esteemed a very formidable likeness.—There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock.—You shall have her for five pounds ten—the sheep are worth the money.

SIR O. Ah! poor Deborah! a woman who set such a value on herself! [*Aside.*]—Five pounds ten—she's mine.

CHARLES S. Knock down my aunt Deborah, Careless!—This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit.—What do you rate him at, Moses?

MOSES. Four guineas.

CHARLES S. Four guineas!—Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his Wig.—Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woollack; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

SIR O. By all means.

CARE. Gone?

CHARLES S. And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of parliament, and noted speakers; and what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

SIR O. That is very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of parliament.

CARE. Well said, little Premium!—I'll knock them down at forty.

CHARLES S. Here's a jolly fellow—I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Norwich: take him at eight pounds.

SIR O. No, no: six will do for the mayor.

CHARLES S. Come, make it guineas, and I throw out the two aldermen there into the bargain.

SIR O. They're mine.

CHARLES S. Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen——But, plague on't, we shall be all day retailing in this manner; do let us deal wholesale: what say you, little Premium? Give me three hundred pounds, and take all that remains on each side in a lump. &c.

CARE. Ay, ay that will be the best way.

SIR O. Well, well, any thing to accommodate you ;— they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

CARE. [*Having put the chair away comes forward L.*] What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee?

SIR O. Yes, sir I mean that, though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

CHARLES S. What, that?—Oh! that's my uncle Oliver ; 'twas done before he went to India.

CARE. Your uncle Oliver!—Gad, then you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw; an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance! an intevenerate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium? [*Slapping him on the shoulder.*]

SIR O. Upon my soul, sir, I do not; I think it as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive ;—but I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber?

CHARLES S. No, hang it; I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in. [*Crosses. L.*]

SIR O. (R.) The rogue's my nephew after all! [*Aside.*]—But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

CHARLES S. (L.) I'm sorry for't, for you certainly will not have it.—Oons, haven't you got enough of them?

SIR O. I forgive him every thing! [*Aside.*]—But, sir, when I take a whim in my head I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

CHARLES S. Don't tease me, master broker; I tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

SIR O. How like his father the dog is! [*Aside.*]—Well, well, I have done.—I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a resemblance—[*Aside*]—Here is a draught for your sum. [*Taking it out of his pocket book.*]

CHARLES S. Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds.

SIR O. You will not let Sir Oliver go?

CHARLES S. Zounds! no!—I tell you once more.

SIR G. Then never mind the difference, we'll balance

that another time—but give me your hand on the bargain; you are an honest fellow, Charles—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free.—Come, Moses. [Crosses, L.]

CHARLES S. (R.) Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow! But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen?

SIR O. (L.) Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

CHARLES S. But hold; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, for I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

SIR O. I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

CHARLES S. Ay, all but the little nabob.

SIR O. You're fixed on that?

CHARLES S. Peremptorily.

SIR O. A dear extravagant rogue! [Aside.]—Good-day!—Come, Moses.—Let me hear now who dares call him profligate! [Exeunt Sir Oliver Surface and Moses, L.]

CARE. Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever met with.

CHARLES S. Egad, he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how the devil Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow.—But hark! here's Rowley; do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

CARE. (R.) I will—don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense; for tradesmen, Charles, are the most exorbitant fellows.

CHARLES S. (L.) Very true, and paying them is only encouraging them. Ay, ay, never fear. [Exit Careless R.]—Soh! this was an odd old fellow, indeed.—Let me see—two-thirds of this five hundred and thirty odd pounds are mine by right. 'Fore Heaven! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for!—Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant.—

Enter ROWLEY, L.

Hah! old Rowley! egad, you are just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

Row. (L.) Yes, I heard they were a going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

CHARLES S. Why, there's the point! my distresses are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits; but I shall be rich and splenetic, all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations; to be sure, 'tis very affecting: but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I?

Row. There's no making you serious a moment.

CHARLES S. Yes, faith, I am so now. Here, my honest Rowley, here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

Row. A hundred pounds! Consider only.—

CHARLES S. Gad's life, don't talk about it: poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and if you don't make haste, we shall have some one call that has a better right to the money.

Row. Ah! there's the point! I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb.—

CHARLES S. 'Be just before you're generous.'—Why, so I would if I could; but Justice is an old hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity for the soul of me.

Row. Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection—

CHARLES S. Ay, ay, it's very true; but, hark'ee, Rowley, while I have, by heaven I'll give; so damn your economy, and away to old Stanley with the money.

[*Exeunt Charles R., Rowley L.*]

SCENE II.—*A Saloon.*

Enter MOSES, R., and SIR OLIVER SURFACE.

MOSES. Well, sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory; 'tis great pity he's so extravagant.

SIR O. But he would not sell my picture.

MOSES. And loves wine and women so much.

SIR O. But he would not sell my picture.

MOSES. And games so deep.

SIR O. But he would not sell my picture.—O, here's Rowley.

Enter ROWLEY, R.

Row. (R.) So, Sir Oliver, I find you have made a purchase—

SIR O. (c.) Yes, yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry.

Row. And here has he commissioned me to re-deliver you part of the purchase money—I mean, though, in your necessitous character of old Stanley.

MOSES. (L.) Ah! there is the pity of all; he is so damned charitable.

Row. And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy them.

SIR O. Well, well, I'll pay his debts. and his benevolence too.—But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

Row. Not yet awhile; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

Enter TRIP, R.

TRIP. O, gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out; this way—[Crosses L.]—Moses, a word.

[*Exeunt Trip and Moses, L.*]

SIR O. (L.) There's a fellow for you—would you believe it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master.

Row. (R.) Indeed!

SIR O. Yes, they are now planning annuity business.—Ah! master Rowley, in my days servants were content with the follies of their masters, when they were worn a little thread-bare; but now, they have their vices, like their birth-day clothes, with the gloss on. [*Exeunt, L.*]

SCENE III.—*A Library, a large Screen, R. 3rd E. Pembroke Table L. V. E. with a book on it; two chairs.*

JOSEPH SURFACE and a SERVANT discovered.

JOSEPH S. No letter from Lady Teazle?

SERV. No, sir.

JOSEPH S. I am surprised she has not sent, if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet, I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favour. *[Knocking heard without, L.]*

SERV. Sir, I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

JOSEPH S. Hold!—See whether it is or not before you go to the door: I have a particular message for you, if it should be my brother.

SERV. 'Tis her ladyship, sir; she always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

JOSEPH S. Stay, stay; draw that screen before the window—*[Servant does so.]*—that will do;—my opposite neighbour is a lady of a curious temper.—*[Servant exit.]*—I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria; but she must by no means be let into that secret,—at least, till I have her more in my power.

Enter LADY TEAZLE, L.

LADY T. What, sentiment in soliloquy now? Have you been very impatient?—O Lud! don't pretend to look grave.—I vow I couldn't come before. *[Crosses, R.]*

JOSEPH S. (L.) O, madam, punctuality is a species of constancy, very unfashionable in a lady of quality.

[Places chairs, and sits after Lady Teazle is seated.]

LADY T. (R.) Upon my word you ought to pity me. Do you know Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles too—that's the best of the story, isn't it?

JOSEPH S. I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up.
[*Aside.*]

LADY T. I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced; don't you, Mr. Surface?

JOSEPH S. Indeed I do. [*Aside.*—Oh certainly I do! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced, how wrong her suspicions were of my having any design on the silly girl.

LADY T. Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But, is'nt it provoking, to have the most ill-natured things said of one?—And there's my friend, Lady Sneerwell, has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation too—that's what vexes me.

JOSEPH S. Aye, madam, to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance—without foundation; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed; for when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

LADY T. No, to be sure, then I'd forgive their malice; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill natured thing of any body—that is, of any friend; and then Sir Peter too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed, 'tis monstrous!

JOSEPH S. But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it to the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him.

LADY T. Indeed!—so that if he suspects me without cause, it follows, that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't.

JOSEPH S. Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be deceived in you,—and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

LADY T. To be sure, what you say is very reasonable; and when the consciousness of my innocence——

JOSEPH S. Ah! my dear madam, there is the great mis-

take ; 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinion?—why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences?—why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions?—why, the consciousness of your innocence.

LADY T. 'Tis very true!

JOSEPH S. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas*, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.

LADY T. Do you think so?

JOSEPH S. Oh! I am sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once; for, in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

LADY T. So, so; then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation.

JOSEPH S. Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

LADY T. Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny!

JOSEPH S. An infallible one, believe me. Prudence like experience, must be paid for.

LADY T. Why, if my understanding were once convinced——

JOSEPH S. O, certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced.—Yes, yes—heaven forbid I should persuade you to do any thing you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honour to desire it.

LADY T. Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument? [Rises.]

JOSEPH S. Ah! the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you. [Rises.]

LADY T. I doubt they do indeed; and I will fairly own to you, that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would

be by Sir Peter's ill usage, sooner than your *honourable logic*, after all.

JOSEPH S. Then, by this hand, which he is unworthy of—
[*Taking her hand.*]

Enter SERVANT, L.

'Sdeath, you blockhead—what do you want?

SERV. I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

JOSEPH S. Sir Peter!—Oons—the devil!

LADY T. Sir Peter! O Lud—I'm ruined—I'm ruined!

SERV. Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

LADY T. Oh! I'm quite undone! What will become of me? Now, Mr. Logic—Oh! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I'm so imprudent again—
[*Goes behind the screen.*]

JOSEPH S. Give me that book.

[*Sits down R. c.; Servant pretends to adjust his chair.*]

Enter SIR PETER.

SIR P. Ay, ever improving himself—Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface!
[*Taps Joseph on the shoulder.*]

JOSEPH S.—Oh! my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon—
[*Gaping—throws away the book.*—] I have been dozing over a stupid book.—Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room.—Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

SIR P. 'Tis very neat indeed.—Well, well, that's proper; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge—hung, I perceive, with maps? [*Walking up towards screen.*]

JOSEPH S. O, yes, I find great use in that screen.

[*Turning Sir Peter away from screen, R.*]

SIR P. I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find any thing in a hurry.

JOSEPH S. Aye, or to hide any thing in a hurry either.
[*Aside.*]

SIR P. Well, I have a little private business——

JOSEPH S. You need not stay. [*To the Servant, who places chairs. Exit Servant, L.*] Here's a chair, Sir Peter—I beg—

SIR P. [*Sits, L.*] Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburthen my mind to you—a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

JOSEPH S. [*Seated, R.*] Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.

SIR P. Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but, what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.

JOSEPH S. Indeed! you astonish me!

SIR P. Yes; and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

JOSEPH S. How! you alarm me exceedingly.

SIR P. Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathise with me!

JOSEPH S. Yes—believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

SIR P. I am convinced of it.—Ah! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

JOSEPH S. I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite?

SIR P. Oh, no! What say you to Charles?

JOSEPH S. My brother! impossible!

SIR P. Oh! my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

JOSEPH S. Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

SIR P. True—but your brother has no sentiment—you never hear him talk so.

JOSEPH S. Yet, I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

SIR P. Ay,—but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively young fellow.

JOSEPH S. That's very true.

SIR P. And then, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any very great affection for me; and if she were to be frail, and I were to make it public, why the town would only laugh at me, the foolish old bachelor, who had married a girl.

JOSEPH S. That's true, to be sure—they would laugh.

SIR P. Laugh—ay, and make ballads, and paragraphs, and the devil knows what, of me.

JOSEPH S. No—you must never make it public.

SIR P. But then again—that the nephew of my old friend, Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong, hurts me more nearly.

JOSEPH S. Ay,—there's the point.—When ingratitude bars the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

SIR P. Ay—I, that was, in a manner, left his guardian; in whose house he had been so often entertained; who never in my life denied him—any advice.

JOSEPH S. O, 'tis not to be credited. There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure; but for my part, till you can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine—I disclaim kindred with him: for the man who can break through the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

SIR P. What a difference there is between you! what noble sentiments!

JOSEPH S. Yet, I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honour.

SIR P. I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her: and: in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall have her own way, and be her own mistress, in that respect for the future; and if I were to die, she will find I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on;—By one, she will

enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live; and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune after my death.

JOSEPH S. This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous.—I wish it may not corrupt my pupil. [*Aside.*

SIR P. Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, though I would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

JOSEPH S. Nor I, if I could help it. [*Aside.*

SIR P. And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

JOSEPH S. [*Softly.*]—O, no, Sir Peter; another time, if you please.

SIR P. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

JOSEPH S. I beg you will not mention it, sir. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate! [*Softly.*]—’Sdeath I shall be ruined every way. [*Aside.*

SIR P. And though you are so averse to my acquainting Lady Teazle with your passion, I’m sure she’s not your enemy in the affair.

JOSEPH S. Pray, Sir Peter, now, oblige me. I am really too much affected, by the subject we have been speaking of, to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is entrusted with his friend’s distresses can never—

Enter SERVANT, L.

Well, sir?

SERV. Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

JOSEPH S. [*Rises.*] ’Sdeath, blockhead, I’m not within—I’m out for the day.

SIR P. [*Rises*] Stay—hold—a thought has struck me :—you shall be at home.

JOSEPH S. [*Crosses to Servant.*] Well, well, let him up. [*Exit Servant, L.* He’ll interrupt Sir Peter, However.

[*Aside.*

SIR P. (R.) Now, my good friend, oblige me, I entreat you.—Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself

somewhere—then do you tax him on the point we have been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

JOSEPH S. O fie, Sir Peter! would you have me join in so mean a trick?—To trepan my brother, too?

SIR P. Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent; if so, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me: [*Going up*] here, behind this screen will be—Hey! what the devil! there seems to be one listener here already—I'll swear I saw a petticoat.

JOSEPH S. Ha! ha! ha! Well this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet, you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph either! Hark'ee, 'tis a little French milliner—a silly rogue that plagues me,—and having some character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind the screen.

SIR P. Ah! Joseph! Joseph! Did I ever think that you—But, egad, she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

JOSEPH S. O, 'twill never go any farther, you may depend upon it.

SIR P. No! then, faith, let her hear it out—Here's a closet will do as well.

JOSEPH S. Well, go in there.

SIR P. Sly rogue! sly rogue! [*Going into the closet, R.*

JOSEPH S. A narrow escape, indeed! and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

LADY T. [*Peeping.*]—Could'nt I steal off?

JOSEPH S. Keep close, my angel!

SIR P. [*Peeping out, R.*]—Joseph, tax him home.

JOSEPH S. Back, my dear friend!

LADY T. Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in?

JOSEPH S. Be still, my life!

SIR P. [*Peeping.*]—You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

JOSEPH S. In, in, my dear Sir Peter—'Fore gad, I wish had a key to the door.

Enter CHARLES SURFACE, L.

CHARLES S. Holla! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

JOSEPH S. (R.) Neither, brother, I assure you.

CHARLES S. (L.) But what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

JOSEPH S. He *was*, brother; but hearing you were coming he did not choose to stay.

CHARLES S. What! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him.

JOSEPH S. No, sir: but I am sorry to find, Charles, that you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uncasiness.

CHARLES S. Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men—But how so, pray?

JOSEPH S. To be plain with you brother—he thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

CHARLES S. Who, I? O Lud! not I, upon my word.—Ha! ha! ha! ha! So the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?

JOSEPH S. This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh——

CHARLES S. True, true, as you were going to say—then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.

JOSEPH S. Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this [Aloud.]

CHARLES S. To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me; but, upon my soul, I never gave her the least encouragement:—besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

JOSEPH S. But sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you.——

CHARLES S. Why, look'ee, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonourable action; but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way—and

that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father——

JOSEPH S. Well——

CHARLES S. Why I believe I should be obliged to——

JOSEPH S. What?

CHARLES S. To borrow a little of your morality, that's all.—But, brother, do you know now that you surprise me exceedingly, by naming *me* with Lady Teazle; for, faith, I always understood you were her favourite.

JOSEPH S. O, for shame, Charles! This retort is foolish.

CHARLES S. Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances——

JOSEPH S. Nay, nay, sir, this is no jest.

CHARLES S. Egad, I'm serious.—Don't you remember one day when I called here——

JOSEPH S. Nay, prythee, Charles——

CHARLES S. And found you together——

JOSEPH S. Zounds, sir! I insist——

CHARLES S. And another time when your servant——

JOSEPH S. Brother, brother, a word with you! Gad, I must stop him. [Aside.]

CHARLES S. Informed, I say, that——

JOSEPH S. Hush! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has heard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

CHARLES S. How, Sir Peter! Where is he?

JOSEPH S. Softly; there! [Points to the closet, r.]

CHARLES S. O, 'fore heaven, I'll have him out. Sir Peter, come forth! [Trying to get to the closet.]

JOSEPH S. No, no——

[Preventing him.]

CHARLES S. I say, Sir Peter, come into court——[Crosses, r.; pulls in Sir Peter.]—What! my old guardian!—What! turn inquisitor, and take evidence incog? O, fie! O, fie!

SIR P. Give me your hand, Charles—I believe I have suspected you wrongfully; but you mustn't be angry with Joseph—'twas my plan!

CHARLES S. Indeed!

SIR P. But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think

near so ill of you as I did: what I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

CHARLES S. Egad, then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more—wasn't it, Joseph? *[Apart to Joseph.]*

SIR P. Ah! you would have retorted on him.

CHARLES S. Ay, ay, that was a joke.

SIR P. Yes, yes, I know his honour too well.

CHARLES S. But you might as well have suspected *him* as *me* in this matter, for all that—mightn't he, Joseph?

[Apart to Joseph.]

SIR P. Well, well, I believe you.

JOSEPH S. Would they were both out of the room!

[Aside.]

SIR P. And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers.

Enter SERVANT, L.

SERV. Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up.

JOSEPH S. Lady Sueerwell! Gads life! she must not come here! *[Exit Servant, L.]* Gentlemen, I beg pardon—I must wait on you down stairs: here is a person come on particular business.

CHARLES S. Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter and I have not met a long time, and I have something to say to him.

JOSEPH S. They must not be left together. *[Aside.]* I'll send Lady Sueerwell away, and return directly.—Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner. *[Apart to Sir Peter, and goes out, L.]*

SIR P. *[Crossing to Joseph.]*—I! not for the world!—*[Apart to Joseph.]*—Ah! Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment—Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment!

CHARLES S. Pshaw! he is too moral by half—and so apprehensive of his good name, as he calls it, that he would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench.

SIR P. No, no.—Come, come,—you wrong him.—No,

no! Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect.—I have a great mind to tell him—we should have such a laugh at Joseph. *[Aside.]*

CHARLES S. Oh, hang him! He's a very anchorite, a young hermit.

SIR P. Hark'ee—you must not abuse him: he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

CHARLES S. Why, you won't tell him?

SIR P. No—but—*this* way. Egad, I'll tell him.—*[Aside.]* Hark'ee—have you a mind to have a good laugh at Joseph?

CHARLES S. I should like it of all things.

SIR P. Then, i'faith, we will—I'll be quit with him for discovering me—He had a girl with him when I called.

[Whispers.]

CHARLES S. What! Joseph?—you jest.

SIR P. Hush!—a little French milliner—and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

CHARLES S. The devil she is! *[Looking at closet.]*

SIR P. Hush! I tell you! *[Points to screen.]*

CHARLES S. Behind the screen! 'Slife, let us unveil.

SIR P. No, no—he's coming—you sha'n't, indeed!

CHARLES S. O, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner!

[Endeavouring to get towards screen, Sir P. preventing.]

SIR P. Not for the world—Joseph will never forgive me—

CHARLES S. I'll stand by you—

SIR P. Odds, here he is! *[Joseph Surface enters L., just as Charles Surface throws down the screen.]*

CHARLES S. (C.) Lady Teazle! by all that's wonderful!

SIR P. (R.) Lady Teazle! by all that's damnable!

CHARLES S. Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret.—Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me? Not a word!—Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter? What! is Morality dumb too?—Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you

are not so now! All mute!—Well—though I can make nothing of the affair. I suppose you perfectly understand one another—so I'll leave you to yourselves— [*Going.*] Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness.—Sir Peter! there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment [*Exit Charles*, *l.* *They stand for some time looking at each other.*]

JOSEPH S. (*l.*) Sir Peter—withstanding—I confess—that appearances are against me—if you will afford me your patience—I make no doubt—but I shall explain every thing to your satisfaction.

SIR P. (*R.*) If you please, sir.

JOSEPH S. The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria—I say sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper—and knowing my friendship to the family—she, sir, I say,—called here—in order that—I might explain these pretensions—but on your coming—being apprehensive—as I said—of your jealousy—she withdrew—and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.

SIR P. A very clear account, upon my word; and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.

LADY T. [*Coming forward.*] For not one word of it, Sir Peter!

SIR P. How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie!

LADY T. There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

SIR P. I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am!

JOSEPH S. [*Aside.*]—'Sdeath, madam, will you betray me?

LADY T. Good Mr Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself.

SIR P. Ay, let her alone, sir; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

LADY T. Hear me, Sir Peter!—I came hither on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her. But I came seduced by

his insidious arguments, at least to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honour to his baseness.

SIR P. Now, I believe, the truth is coming, indeed!

JOSEPH S. The woman's mad!

LADY T, No, sir,—she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means.—Sir Peter, I do not expect you to credit me—but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has penetrated to my heart, that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. [*Crosses to L.*] As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he affected honourable addresses to his ward—I behold him now in a light so truly despicable, that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him. [*Exit Lady Teazle, L.*]

JOSEPH S. Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, Heaven knows—

SIR P. [*Crosses, L.*] That you are a villain! and so I leave you to your conscience.

JOSEPH S. You are too rash, Sir Peter; you shall hear me.—The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to—

SIR P. O, damn your sentiments!

[*Exeunt Sir Peter and Surface, talking, L.*]

ACT. V.

SCENE I.—*The Library.*

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE and SERVANT, L.

JOSEPH S. Mr. Stanley!—and why should you think I would see him? You must know he comes to ask something.

SERV. Sir, I should not have let him in, but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him.

JOSEPH S. Pshaw! blockhead! to suppose that I should

now he in a temper to receive visits from poor relations !
— Well , why don't you show the fellow up ?

SERV. I will , sir. —Why , sir , it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my lady—

JOSEPH S. Go , fool ! [*Exit Servant , L.*]—Sure Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before . My character with Sir Peter , my hopes with Maria , destroyed in a moment ! I'm in a rare humour to listen to other people's distresses ! I sha'n't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley.—So ! here he comes , and Rowley with him . I must try to recover myself , and put a little charity into my face , however. [*Exit , R.*]

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE and ROWLEY , L.

SIR O. What ! does he avoid us !—That was he , was it yes ?

Row. It was , sir . But I doubt you are come a little too abruptly . His nerves are so weak , that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him . I should have gone first to break it to him .

SIR. O. (R.) O . plague of his nerves ! Yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking !

Row. (L.) As to his way of thinking , I cannot pretend to decide ; for , to do him justice , he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom , though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it .

SIR O. Yet he as a string of charitable sentiments I suppose , at his fingers' ends .

Row. Or rather , at his tongue's end , Sir Oliver ; for I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that " Charity begins at home ."

SIR O. And his , I presume , is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all .

Row. I doubt you'll find it so ;—but he's coming . I mustn't seem to interrupt you ; and you know immediately as you leave him , I come in to announce your arrival in your real character .

SIR O. True; and afterwards you'll meet me at Sir Peter's.

Row. Without losing a moment.

[Exit, L.]

SIR O. I don't like the complaisance of his features.

— Enter JOSEPH SURFACE, R.

JOSEPH S. (R.) Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons for keeping you a moment waiting—Mr. Stanley, I presume.—

SIR O. (L.) At your service.

JOSEPH S. Sir, I beg you will do me the honour to sit down—I entreat you, sir!

SIR O. Dear sir—there's no occasion—too civil by half! [Aside.]

JOSEPH S. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley; but I am extremely happy to see you look so well. You were nearly related to my mother, Mr. Stanley, I think?

SIR O. I was, sir;—so nearly that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

JOSEPH S. Dear sir, there needs no apology:—he that is in distress, though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

SIR O. If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

JOSEPH S. I wish he was, sir, with all my heart: you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

SIR O. I should not need one—my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty would enable you to become the agent of his charity.

JOSEPH S. My dear sir, you were strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a worthy man, a very worthy man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age. I will tell you, my good sir, in confidence, what he has done for me has been a mere nothing; though people, I know, have thought otherwise; and, for my part, I never chose to contradict the report.

SIR O. What! has he never transmitted you bullion—pees—pagodas?

JOSEPH S. O, dear sir, nothing of the kind:—No, no—a few presents now and then—china, shawls, congou tea, avadavats, and Indian crackers—little more, believe me,

SIR O. Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds!—Avadavats and Indian crackers! [Aside.

JOSEPH S. (R.) Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother: there are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

SIR O. (L.) Not I, for one! [Aside.

JOSEPH S. The sums I have lent him!—Indeed, I have been exceedingly to blame; it was an amiable weakness: however, I don't pretend to defend it,—and now I feel it doubly culpable, since it has deprived me of the pleasure of serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart dictates.

SIR O. Dissembler! [Aside]—Then, sir, you can't assist me?

JOSEPH S. At present, it grieves me to say, I cannot; but, whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

SIR O. I am extremely sorry—

JOSEPH S. Not more than I, believe me; to pity, without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask and be denied.

SIR O. Kind sir, your most obedient humble servant.

JOSEPH S. You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley. William be ready to open the door.

SIR O. O, dear sir, no ceremony.

JOSEPH S. Your very obedient.

SIR O. Sir, your most obsequious.

JOSEPH S. You may depend upon hearing from me, whenever I can be of service.

SIR O. Sweet sir, you are too good!

JOSEPH S. In the mean time, I wish you health and spirits.

SIR O. Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant.

JOSEPH S. Sir ; yours as sincerely.

SIR O. Now y am satisfied.

[*Aside ; Exit , L.*

JOSEPH S. This is one bad effect of a good character ; it invites application from the unfortunate , and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good qualities ; whereas the sentimental French plate I use instead of it , makes just as good a show , and pays no tax.

Enter ROWLEY , L.

Row. (L.) Mr. Surface , your servant : I was apprehensive of interrupting you , though my business demands immediate attention , as this note will inform you.

JOSEPH S. (R.) Always happy to see Mr. Rowley,—a rascal ! [*Aside—Reads the letter.*].—Sir Oliver Surface!—My uncle arrived !

Row. He is , indeed : we have just parted with him—quite well , after a speedy voyage , and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew !

JOSEPH S. I am anstonished!—William ! stop Mr. Stanley , if he's not gone.

Row. Oh ! he's out of reach , I believe.

JOSEPH S. Why did you not let me know this when you came in together ?

Row. I thought you had particular business ;—but I must be gone to inform your brother , and appoint him here to meet your uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

JOSEPH S. So he says. Well , I am strangely overjoyed at his coming.—Never , to be sure , was any thing so damned unlucky. [*Aside.*

Row. You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

JOSEPH S. Oh ! I am overjoyed to hear it——Just at this time ! [*Aside.*

Row. I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him.

[*Exit , L.*

JOSEPH S. Do , do ; pray give my best duty and affection.

Indeed, I cannot express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him—Certainly his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill-fortune! [Exit, R.]

SCENE II.—*Sir Peter Teazle's.* X

Enter MAID and MRS. CANDOUR.

MAID. (R.) Indeed, ma'am, my lady will see nobody at present.

MRS. C. (L.) Did you tell her it was her friend, Mrs. Candour?

MAID. Yes ma'am; but she begs you will excuse her.

MRS. C. Do go again,—I shall be glad to see her, if it be only for a moment, for I am sure she must be in great distress. [Exit Maid R.] Dear heart, how provoking! I'm not mistress of half the circumstances! We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the names of the parties at length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE, L.

Oh, dear Sir Benjamin! you have heard, I suppose—

SIR B. (L.) Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface—

MRS. C. (R.) And Sir Peter's discovery—

SIR B. O! the strangest piece of business, to be sure!

MRS. C. Well, I never was so surprised in my life. I am so sorry for all parties, indeed.

SIR B. Now I don't pity Sir Peter at all: he was so extravagantly partial to Mr. Surface.

MRS. C. Mr. Surface! Why, 'twas with Charles, Lady Teazle was detected.

SIR B. No such thing, I tell you—Mr. Surface is the gallant.

MRS. C. No, no, Charles is the man. 'Twas Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

SIR B. I tell you I had it from one—

MRS. C. And I have it from one—

SIR B. Who had it from one, who had it—

MRS. C. From one immediately—but here comes Lady Sneerwell; perhaps she knows the whole affair.

[Crosses, c.

Enter LADY SNEERWELL, L.

LADY S. So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Teazle.

MRS. C. (c.) Ay, my dear friend, who would have thought—

LADY S. (L.) Well, there is no trusting appearances; though, indeed, she was always too lively for me.

MRS. C. To be sure, her manners were a little too free: but then she was so young!

LADY S. And had, indeed, some good qualities.

MRS. C. So she had, indeed. But have you heard the particulars?

LADY S. No; but every body says that Mr. Surface—

SIR B. (R.) Ay, there; I told you Mr. Surface was the man.

MRS. C. No, no: indeed the assignation was with Charles.

LADY S. With Charles! You alarm me, Mrs. Candour!

MRS. C. Yes, yes, he was the lover. Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was only the informer.

SIR B. Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour; but, be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not—

MRS. C. Sir Peter's wound! O mercy! I didn't hear a word of their fighting.

LADY S. Nor I a syllable.

SIR B. No! what, no mention of the duel? [Crosses, c.

MRS. C. (R.) Not a word.

SIR B. (C.) O, yes: they fought before they left the room.

LADY S. (D.) Pray, let us hear.

MRS. C. Ay, do oblige us with the duel.

SIR B. « Sir, » says Sir Peter, immediately after the discovery, « you are a most ungrateful fellow. »

MRS. C. Ay, to Charles—

SIR B. No, no—to Mr. Surface—« a most ungrateful fellow ; and old as I am , sir , » says he , « I insist on immediate satisfaction. »

Mrs. C. Ay, that must have been to Charles ; for 'tis very unlikely Mr. Surface should fight in his own house.

SIR B. Gad's life , ma'am , not at all—« Giving me immediate satisfaction. » On this , ma'am , Lady Teazle , seeing Sir Peter in such danger , ran out of the room in strong hysterics , and Charles after her , calling out for hartshorn and water ; then , madam , they began to fight with swords—

Enter CRABTREE , L. ; crosses L. C.

CRAB. With pistols , nephew—pistols : I have it from undoubted authority.

Mrs. C. [*Crosses to Crabtree.*] O , Mr. Crabtree , then it is all true !

CRAB. (L. c. Too true , indeed , madam , and Sir Peter is dangerously wounded—

SIR B. (R.) By a thrust in seagoon quite through his left side—

CRAB. By a bullet lodged in the thorax.

Mrs. C. Mercy on me ! Poor Sir Peter !

CRAB. Yes , madam ; though Charles would have avoided the matter , if he could.

Mrs. C. I told you who it was ; I knew Charles was the person.

SIR B. My uncle , I see , knows nothing of the matter.

CRAB. But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude.

SIR B. That I told you , you know—

CRAB. Do , nephew , let me speak !—and insisted on immediate—

SIR B. Satisfaction ! Just as I said—

CRAB. Odds life , nephew , allow others to know something too. A pair of pistols lay on the bureau , (for Mr. Surface , it seems , had come home the night before late from Salthill , where he had been to see the Montem with

a friend, who has a son at Eton), so, unluckily, the pistols were left charged.

SIR B. I heard nothing of this.

CRAB. Sir Peter forced Charles to take one; and they fired, it seems, pretty nearly together. Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed; but, what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakspeare that stood over the fire-place, grazed out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

SIR B. My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I confess; but I believe mine is the only true one, for all that.

LADY S. I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information. [*Aside.*]—
[*Exit Lady Sneerwell, L.*]

SIR B. Ah! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

CRAB. Yes, yes, they certainly do say—but that's neither here nor there.

MRS. C. But, pray, where is Sir Peter at present?

CRAB. Oh! they brought him home, and he is now in the house, though the servants are ordered to deny him.

MRS. C. I believe so, and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

CRAB. Yes, yes; and I saw one of the faculty enter just before me.

SIR B. Hey! who comes here?

CRAB. O, this is he: the physician, depend on't.

MRS. C. O, certainly: it must be the physician; and now we shall know.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE, L.

CRAB. (R. C. Well, doctor, what hopes?

MRS. C. (R.) Ay, doctor, how's your patient?

SIR B. Now, doctor, isn't it a wound with a small-sword?

[*Coming down on Sir Oliver, L.*]

CRAB. A bullet lodged in the thorax, for a hundred.

SIR O. Doctor! a wound with a small sword! and a bullet in the thorax! Oons! are you mad, good people?

SIR B. (L.) Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor?

SIR O. Truly I am to thank you for my degree if I am.

CRAB. Only a friend of Sir Peter's, then I presume. But, sir, you must have heard of his accident?

SIR O. Not a word!

CRAB. Not of his being dangerously wounded?

SIR O. The devil he is!

SIR B. Run through the body—

CRAB. Shot in the breast—

SIR B. By one Mr. Surface—

CRAB. Ay, the younger.

SIR O. Hey! what the plague! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts: however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

SIR B. O, yes, we agree in that. [*Crosses behind to R.*]

CRAB. Yes, yes, I believe there can be no doubt of that.

SIR O. Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive; for here he comes walking, as if nothing at all was the matter.

Enter SIR PETER TEAZLE, L.

Odd's heart, Sir Peter, you are come in good time, I promise you; for we had just given you over.

SIR B. (R.) Egad, uncle, this is the most sudden recovery!

SIR O. (L. c.) Why, man, what do you out of bed with a small sword through your body, and a bullet lodged in your thorax?

SIR P. (L.) A small sword, and a bullet!

SIR O. Ay, these gentlemen would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor, to make me an accomplice.

SIR P. Why, what is all this [*Crosses to Sir B.*]

SIR B. We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true, and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune. [*Goes up a little.*]

SIR P. So, so; all over the town already. [*Aside*]

CRAB. Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at your years. [*Retires a little up.*]

SIR P. (R. C.) Sir, what business is that of yours?

MRS. C. (R.) Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he is very much to be pitied.

SIR P. Plague on your pity, ma'am! I desire none of it.

[*Mrs. Candour crosses L.*]

SIR B. [*Advances on his L. H.*] However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jest you will meet with on the occasion.

SIR P. Sir, sir, I desire to be master in my own house.

CRAB. 'Tis no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

SIR P. I insist on being left to myself: without ceremony—I insist on your leaving my house directly.

MRS. C. Well, well, we are going, and depend on't we'll make the best report of it we can.

SIR P. Leave my house!

CRAB. And tell how hardly you've been treated—

SIR P. Leave my house!

SIR B. And how patiently you bear it.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Candour, Sir Benjamin, and Crabtree L.*]

SIR P. Leave my house!—Fiends! vipers! furies! Oh! that their own venom would choke them! [*Crosses, L.*]

SIR O. They are very provoking, indeed, Sir Peter.

Enter ROWLEY, L.

ROW. I heard high words: what has ruffled you, sir?

SIR P. (C.) Pshaw! what signifies asking? Do I ever pass a day without my vexations?

ROW. Well, I'm not inquisitive.

SIR O. (R.) Well, I am not inquisitive; I come only to tell you that I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

SIR P. A precious couple they are!

ROW. Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgement was right, Sir Peter.

SIR O. Yes, I find Joseph is indeed the man? after all.

ROW. Ay, as Sir Peter says, he is a man of sentiment.

SIR O. And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

Row. It certainly is edification to hear him talk.

SIR O. Oh, he's 'a model for the young men of the age!—But how's this, Sir Peter? You don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise, as I expected.

SIR P. (c.) Sir Oliver, we live in a damned wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

Row. (L.) What! do you say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life?

SIR P. (c.) Pshaw! Plague on you both! I see by your sneering you have heard the whole affair. I shall go mad among you!

Row. Then, to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's so humble, that she deigned to request me to be her advocate with you.

SIR P. And does Sir Oliver know all this?

SIR O. Every circumstance.

SIR P. What of the closet and the screen, hey?

SIR O. Yes, yes, and the little French milliner. O, I have been vastly diverted with the story! Ha! ha! ha!

SIR P. 'Twas very pleasant.

SIR O. I never laughed more in my life. I assure you : Ha! ha! ha!

SIR P. O. vastly diverting! Ha! ha! ha!

Row. To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments! Ha! ha! ha!

SIR P. Yes, yes, his sentiments! Ha! ha! ha! Hypocritical villain!

SIR O. Ay, and that rogue Charles to pull Sir Peter out of the closet: Ha! ha! ha!

SIR P. Ha! ha! 'Twas devilish entertaining, to be sure!

SIR O. Ha! ha! ha! Egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down. Ha! ha!

SIR P. Yes, yes, my face when the screen was thrown down : Ha! ha! ha! Oh, I must never show my head again!

SIR O. But come, come; it isn't fair to laugh at you neither, my old friend; though, upon my soul, I can't help it.

SIR P. O pray don't restrain your mirth on my account : it does not hurt me at all ! I laugh at the whole affair myself. Yes yes, I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance a very happy situation. O yes, and then of a morning to read the paragraph about Mr. S——, Lady T——, and Sir P——, will be so entertaining ! I shall certainly leave town to-morrow, and never look mankind in the face again. [Crosses, R.]

Row. (c.) Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools : but I see Lady Teazle going towards the next room ; I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

SIR O. Perhaps my being here prevents her coming to you. [Crosses, L.] Well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you ; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's, where I am now returning, if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy. [Exit, L.]

SIR P. Ah, I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart ; though 'tis a vile unlucky place for discoveries. She is not coming here, you see, Rowley.

RLW. No, but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive. See, she is in tears.

SIR P. Certainly a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little ?

Row. Oh, this is ungenerous in you !

SIR P. Well, I know not what to think. You remember the letter I found of hers, evidently intended for Charles ?

Row. A mere forgery, Sir Peter, laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction of.

SIR P. I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way. What a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has ! Rowley, I'll go to her.

Row. Certainly.

SIR P. Though when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more.

Row. Let them laugh, and retort their malice only by showing them you are happy in spite of it.

SIR P. Faith, so I will ! and, if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the country.

Row. Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion—

SIR P. Hold, master Rowley ! If you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter any thing like a sentiment : I have had enough of them to serve me the rest of my life. [*Exeunt*, R.]

SCENE III.—*The Library.*

Enter LADY SNEERWELL and JOSEPH SURFACE, L.

LADY S. Impossible ! Will not Sir Peter immediately be reconciled to Charles, and of consequence no longer oppose his union with Maria ? The thought is distraction to me.

JOSEPH S. Can passion furnish a remedy ?

LADY S. No, nor cunning neither. O ! I was a fool and idiot, to league with such a blunderer !

JOSEPH S. Sure, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer ; yet you see I bear the accident with calmness. Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong, but I don't think we're so totally defeated neither.

LADY S. No !

JOSEPH S. You tell me you have made a trial of Snake since we met, and that you still believe him faithful to us.

LADY S. I do believe.

JOSEPH S. And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove, that Charles is at this time contracted by vows and honour to your ladyship, which some of his former letters to you will serve to support.

LADY S. This indeed, might have assisted.

JOSEPH S. Come, come ; it is not too late yet. [*Knocking at the door*, L.] But hark ! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver : retire to that room ; we'll consult farther when he is gone.

LADY S. Well, but if he should find you out, too ?

JOSEPH S. Oh, I have no fear of that. Sir Peter will hold his tongue for his own credit's sake—and you may depend on it, I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side!

LADY S. I have no diffidence of your abilities, only be constant to one roguery at a time. [*Exit Lady Sneerwell, a.*]

JOSEPH S. I will, I will. So! 'tis confounded hard, after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events, my character is so much better than Charles's, that I certainly—Hey!—what!—this is not Sir Oliver, but old Stanley again. Plague on't! that he should return to tease me just now—I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here—and—

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE, L.

Gad's life, Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time? You must not stay now, upon my word.

SIR O. (L.) Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here, and though he has been so penurious to you I'll try what he'll do for me.

JOSEPH S. (R.) Sir, 'tis impossible for you to stay now, so I must beg—Come any other time, and I promise you, you shall be assisted.

SIR O. No: Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

JOSEPH S. Zounds, sir! then I insist on your quitting the room directly.

SIR O. Nay, sir—

JOSEPH S. Sir, I insist on't: here, William! show this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir,—not one moment—this in such insolence! [*Going to push him out, L.*]

Enter CHARLES SURFACE, L.

CHARLES S. Hey day! what's the matter now! What the devil, have you got hold of my little broker here? Zounds, brother! don't hurt little Premium. [*Crosses, c.*] What's the matter, my little fellow?

JOSEPH S. (R.) So! he has been with you too, has he?

CHARLES S. (C.) To be sure he has. Why, he's as honest a little—But sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money too, have you?

JOSEPH S. Borrowing! No! But, brother, you know we expect Sir Oliver here every—

CHARLES S. O Gad, that's true! Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure?

JOSEPH S. Yet Mr. Stanley insists—

CHARLES S. Stanley! why his name's Premium.

JOSEPH S. No, sir, Stanley.

CHARLES S. No, no, Premium.

JOSEPH S. Well, no matter which—but—

CHARLES S. Ay, ay, Stanley or Premium, 'tis the same thing, as you say; for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides A. B. at the coffee-house.

JOSEPH S. 'Sdeath! here's Sir Oliver at the door. Now I beg, Mr. Stanley—

CHARLES S. Ay; ay, and I beg, Mr. Premium—

SIR O. Gentlemen—

JOSEPH S. Sir, by heaven you shall go!

CHARLES S. Ay, out with him, certainly!

SIR O. This violence—

JOSEPH S. Sir, 'tis your own fault.

CHARLES S. Out with him, to be sure.

[Both forcing Sir Oliver out, L.]

Enter LADY TEAZLE and SIR PETER, MARIA, and

ROWLEY L. —

SIR P. My old friend, Sir Oliver—hey! What in the name of wonder—here are dutiful nephews—assault their uncle at a first visit!

LADY T. Indeed, Sir Oliver, 'twas well we came in to rescue you.

Row. Truly, it was; for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

SIR O. Nor of Premium either; the necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman; and with the other, I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

JOSEPH S. (R.) Charles!

CHARLES S. (R.) Joseph!

JOSEPH S. 'Tis now complete!

CHARLES S. Very!

SIR O. (c.) Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty; and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him: judge then my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude.

SIR P. Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be selfish, treacherous, and hypocritical.

LADY T. But if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call *me* to his character.

SIR P. Then, I believe, we need add no more: if he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment, that he is known to the world.

CHARLES S. If they talk this way to honesty, what will they say to me, by and bye? [Aside.]

[*Sir Peter, Lady Teazle, and Maria, retire.*]

SIR O. As for that prodigal, his brother, there—

CHARLES S. Ay, now comes my turn: the damned family pictures will ruin me. [Aside.]

JOSEPH S. Sir Oliver—uncle, will you honour me with a hearing?

CHARLES S. Now if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I might recollect myself a little. [Aside.]

SIR O. I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself? [To Joseph.]

JOSEPH S. I trust I could.

SIR O. Nay, if you desert your roguery in its distress, and try to be justified—you have even less principle than I thought you had. [To Charles.] Well, sir! you could justify yourself too, I suppose?

CHARLES S. Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

SIR O. What!—Little Premium has been let too much into the secret, I suppose?

CHARLES S. True, sir; but they were *family secrets*, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

Row. Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

SIR O. Odd's heart, no more I can; nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know, the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors; sold me judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china.

CHARLES S. To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvass, that's the truth on't. My ancestors may certainly rise up in judgment against me; there's no denying it; but believe me sincere when I tell you—and upon my soul I would not say so if I was not—that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction in seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

SIR O. Charles, I believe you; give me your hand again: the ill-looking little fellow over the settee has made your peace.

CHARLES S. Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

LADY T. [*Advancing, c., Maria on her left hand.*] Yet, I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to.

SIR O. Oh, I have heard of his attachment there, and, with the young lady's pardon, if I construe right—that blush—

SIR P. Well, child, speak your sentiments!

MARIA. Sir, I have little to say, bdt that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy; for me—whatever claim I had to his attention, I willingly resign to one who has a better title.

CHARLES S. How, Maria!

SIR P. Hey day! what's the mystery now?—While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else; and now that he is likely to reform, I'll warrant you won't have him.

MARIA. His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

CHARLES S. Lady Sneerwell!

JOSEPH S. (R.) Brother, it is with great concern I am

obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice compels me, and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed.

[*Opens the door*, R.]

Enter LADY SNEERWELL, R.

SIR P. So! another French milliner! Egad, he has one in every room in the house, I suppose.

LADY S. Ungrateful Charles! Well may you be surprised, and feel for the indelicate situation your perfidy has forced me into.

CHARLES S. Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours? For, as I have life, I don't understand it.

JOSEPH S. I believe, sir, there is but evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

SIR P. And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake. Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

Row. Walk in, Mr. Snake.

Enter SNAKE, L.

I thought his testimony might be wanted: however, it happens unluckily, that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell, not to support her.

LADY S. (R.) A villain! Treacherous to me at last!—Speak, fellow; have you, too, conspired against me?

SNAKE. (L.) I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons: you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question; but I, unfortunately, have been offered double to speak the truth.

SIR P. Plod and counter-plot! I wish your ladyship joy of your negociation.

LADY S. (*Crosses*, L.) The torments of shame and disappointment on you all!

LADY T. Hold, Lady Sneerwell: before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles, and answering them yourself; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scandalous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate,

begs leave to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer

LADY S. You, too, madam—provoking—insolent.—
May your husband live these fifty years! [Exit, L.]

SIR P. Oons! what a fury!

LADY T. A malicious creature, indeed!

SIR P. [On Lady Teazle's right hand.] What, Not for her last wish?

LADY T. O no!

SIR O. Well, sir, and what have you to say now?

JOSEPH S. Sir, I am so confounded, to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner, to impose on us all, that I know not what to say: however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. For the man who attempts to—

[Crosses and exit, L.]

SIR P. Moral to the last!

SIR O. Ay, and marry her,—Joseph, if you can. Egad! you'll do very well together.

ROW. I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake, at present.

SNAKE. (L.) Before I go, I beg pardon once for all, for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

— SIR P. Well, well, you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

SNAKE. But I must request of the company, that it shall never be known.

SIR P. Hey—What the plague!—Are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life?

SNAKE. Ah, sir, consider,—I live by the badness of my character; and if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world. [Exit, L.]

SIR O. Well, well; we'll not traduce you by saying any thing in your praise, never fear.

LADY T. See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

SIR O. Ay, ay, that's as it should be; and, egad, we'll have the wedding to morrow morning.

CHARLES S. Thank you, dear uncle!

SIR P. What, you rogue! don't you ask the girl's consent first!

CHARLES S. Oh, I have done that a long time—a minute ago—and she has looked yes.

MARIA. For shame, Charles!—I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word.

SIR O. Well, then, the fewer the better;—may your love for each other never know abatement!

SIR P. And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I intend to do!

CHARLES S. Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me: and I suspect that I owe you much.

SIR P. Ay, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

CHARLES S. Why as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it; but here shall be my monitor—my gentle guide—Ah! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine?

Though thou, dear maid, should'st wave thy beauty's sway,
Thou still must rule, because I will obey:

An humble fugitive from Folly view,
No sanctuary near but Love and you; [*To the audience.*
You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,
For even Scandal dies, if you approve.

Epilogue

BY MR. COLMAN.

Spoken by Lady Teazle.

I, who was late so volatile and gay,
 Like a trade wind must now blow all one way
 Bend all my cares, my studies, and my vows,
 To one dull rusty weathercock—my spouse!
 So wills our virtuous bard—the motley Bayes
 Of crying epilogues and laughing plays!
 Old bachelors, who marry smart young wives,
 Learn from our play to regulate your lives:
 Each bring his dear to town, all faults upon her—
 London will prove the very source of honour.
 Plunged fairly in, like a cold bath it serves,
 When principles relax, to brace the nerves:
 Such is my case; and yet I must deplore—
 That the gay dream of dissipation's o'er.
 And say, ye fair! was ever lively wife,
 Born with a genius for the highest life,
 Like me, untimely blasted in her bloom?
 Like me, condemn'd to such a dismal doom?
 Save money—when I just knew how to waste it!
 Leave London—just as I began to taste it!
 Must I, then, watch the early crowing cock,
 The melancholy ticking of a clock;
 In a lone rustic hall for ever pounded,
 With dogs, cast, rats, and squalling brats surrounded?
 With humble curate can I now retire,
 (While good Sir Peter boozes with the squire,)
 And at backgammon mortify my soul,

That pants for loo, or flutters at a vole?
Seven's the main! Dear sound, that must expire,
Lost at hot cockles round a Christmas fire!
The transient hour of fashion too soon spent,
Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content!
Farewell the plumed head, the cushion'd tête,
That takes the cushion from its proper seat!
That spirit-stirring drum!—card-drum I mean!
Spadille—odd trick—pam—basto—king and queen
And you, ye knockers, that, with brazen throat,
The welcome visitors' approach denote;
Farewell all quality of high renown,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious town!
Farewell! your revels I partake no more,
And Lady Teazle's occupation's o'er!
All this I told our bard; he smiled, and said'twas clear,
I ought to play deep tragedy next year,
Meanwhile he drew wise morals from his play,
And in these solemn periods stalk'd away:
Blest were the fair like you; her faults who stopt,
And closed her follies when the curtain dropt!
No more in vice or error to engage,
Or play the fool at large on life's great stage.

THE RIVALS.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Sir Anthony Absolute.
Sir Lucius O' Trigger.
Faulkland.
Captain Absolute.
Acres.

Fag.
David.
Mrs. Malaprop.
Lydia Lauguish.
Julia.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Bath.*

COACHMAN and FAG meeting.

FAG. What! Thomas!—Sure, 'tis he!—What, Thomas! Thomas!

COACH. Hey? odds life!—Mr. Fag, give us your hand, my old fellow servant!

FAG. Excuse my glove, Thomas; I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad! why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty!—but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath?

COACH. Sure, master, madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postillion be all come.

FAG. Indeed!

COACH. Ay: master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit, so he'd a mind to gi't the slip—an whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

FAG. Ay, ay; hasty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute.

COACH. But tell us, M. Fag, how does young master? Odds! Sir Anthony will stare to see the captain here!

FAG. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

COACH. Why, sure!

3.

FAG. At present, I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

COACH. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'nt chang'd for the better.

FAG. I have not chang'd, Thomas.

COACH. No! why, didn't you say you had left young master?

FAG. No.—Well, honest Thomas. I must puzzle you no further;—briefly then—Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

COACH. The devil they are: do tell us, Mr Fag, the meaning on't.

FAG. Why, then the cause of all this is love—love, Thomas, who has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

COACH. But, pray, why does your master pass only for ensign?—now, if he had shammed general, indeed—

FAG. Ah, Thomas! there lays the mystery o'the matter!—Hark ye, Thomas, my master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste—a lady who likes him better as a half-pay ensign, than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Antony Absolute, a baronet, of three thousand a year.

COACH. That is an odd taste, indeed!—But has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? is she rich, eh?

FAG. Rich! why, I believe she owns half the stocks:—Z—s, Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easily as I could my washerwoman!—She has a lap-dog that eats out of gold—she feeds her parrot with small pearls, and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

COACH. Bravo, faith—Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands at least; but does she draw kindly with the captain?

FAG. As fond as pigeons.

COACH. May one hear her name?

FAG. Miss Lydia Languish:—but there is an old tough aunt in the way, though by-the bye, she has never seen my master—for he got acquainted with miss while on a visit to Gloucestershire.

COACH. Well, I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony. But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath? I ha' heard a great deal of it;—here's a mort o'merry making, eh?

FAG. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge—but damn the place, I'm tired of it: their regular hours stupefy me—not a fiddle or a card after eleven! however, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties; I'll introduce you there. Thomas, you'll like him much. But Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed you must:—Here, now, this wig; what the devil do you do with a wig, Thomas? none of the London whips, of any degree of ton, wear wigs now.

COACH. More's the pity, more's the pity, I say, Mr. Fag—Odds life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next. Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the bar, I guessed 'would mount to the box! but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag: and look ye, I'll never give up mine, the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

FAG. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that. But hold, mark—mark, Thomas.

COACH. Zooks, 'tis the captain! Is that the lady with him?

FAG. No, no, that is madam Lucy, my master's mistress's maid: they lodge at that house—but I must after him, to tell him the news.

COACH. Odd, he's giving her money!—Well, Mr. Fag—

FAG. Good bye, Thomas; I have an appointment in Gyde's porch, this evening, at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party.

[*Exeunt* THOMAS, R. FAG, L.

SCENE II.—*A Dressing-Room in Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.*

LYDIA LANGUISH *sitting on a Sofa, with a Book in her hand*;—LUCY, *as just returned from a Message, on her R.*

LUCY. Indeed, ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it: I don't believe there's circulating library in Bath I han't't been at.

LYD. And could not you get "The Reward of Constancy."

LUCY No, indeed, ma'am.

LYD. Nor "The Fatal Connexion?"

LUCY. No, indeed, ma'am.

LYD. Nor "The Mistakes of the Heart?"

LUCY. Ma'am, as ill luck would have it, Mr. Bull said, Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

LYD. Heigho! Did you inquire for "The Delicate Distress?"

LUCY. O, "The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?" — Yes, indeed, ma'am I asked every where for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'nt fit for a Christian to read.

LYD. Heigho! Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me; she has a most observing thumb, and, I believe, cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes. Well, child, what have you brought me?

LUCY. Oh, here, ma'am! [*Taking Books from under her Cloak, and from her Pockets.*] This is "The Man of Feeling," and this "Peregrine Pickle."—Here are "The Tears of Sensibility," and "Humphrey Clinker."

LYD. Hold! here's some one coming—quick, see who it is—[*Exit Lucy, L.*]—Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice!

Re-enter LUCY, L.

LUCY. Lud, ma'am! here is Miss Neville!

LYD. Is it possible!

Enter JULIA L.

LYD. My dearest Julia, how delighted I am!—[*They embrace.*]
—How unexpected was this happiness!

JUL. True, Lydia, and our pleasure is the greater; but what has been the matter? you were denied to me at first.

LYD. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you! but first inform me what has conjured you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

JUL. He is; we are arrived within this hour, and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

LYD. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress; I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, though your prudence may condemn me: my letters have informed you of my whole connexion with Beverley; but I have lost him, Julia;—my aunt has discovered our intercourse, by a note she intercepted, and has confined me ever since: Yet would you believe it? she has fallen absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet, she met one night, since we have been here, at Lady Macshuffle's rout.

JUL. You jest, Lydia.

LYD. No, upon my word:—She really carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name though, till she choose to be known to him; but it is a Delia, or a Celia, I assure you.

JUL. Then, surely, she is now more indulgent to her niece?

LYD. Quite the contrary. Since she has discovered her own frailty, she is become ten times more suspicious of mine. Then I must inform you of another plague; that odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day, so that, I protest, I shall be teased out of all spirits!

JUL. Come, come, Lydia, hope for the best. Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

LYD. But you have not heard the worst. Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley, just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

JUL. What was his offence?

LYD. Nothing at all; but I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel; and, somehow, I was afraid he would never give me opportunity; so, last Thursday, I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was, at that time, paying his addresses to another woman. I signed it, "Your unknown friend," showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood; put myself in a violent passion, and vow'd I'd never see him more.

JUL. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

LYD. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out; I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever.

JUL. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so.—Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign: and you have thirty thousand pounds!

LYD. But, you know, I lose most of my fortune, if I marry, without my aunt's consent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty; nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

JUL. Nay this is caprice!

LYD. What, does Julia tax me with caprice? I thought her lover Faulkland had inured her to it.

JUL. I do not love even his faults.

LYD. But you have sent to him, I suppose?

JUL. Not yet, upon my word! nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath:—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden I could not inform him of it.

LYD. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress, though

under the protection of Sir Anthony; yet have you, for this long year, been a slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

JUL. Nay, you are wrong entirely. We were contracted before my father's death: that, and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish. He is too generous to trifle on such a point; and for his character, you wrong him there too. No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble, to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness. Unused to the fopperies of love. He is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover; but, being unhacknied in the passion, his affection is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every look and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his. Yet, though his pride calls for this full return, his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him, which would entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be loved to the degree he wishes, he still suspects that he is not loved enough. This, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardour of his attachment.

LYD. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him; but tell me candidly, Julia, had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are? Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

JUL. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me; yet, surely, that alone were an obligation sufficient——

LYD. Obligation! why, a water spaniel would have done as much! Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!—What's here?

Enter Lucy, in a hurry, L.

LUCY. O, ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute, just come home with your aunt!

LYD. They'll not come here :—Lucy, do you watch.

[Exit Lucy, L.]

JUL. Yet I must go; Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me, as long as she chooses, with her select words, so ingeniously misapplied, without being mispronounced.

[Crosses, to R.]

Enter Lucy, L.

LUCY. O lud, ma'am! they are both coming up stairs.

LYD. Well, I'll not detain you. Adieu, my dear Julia! I'm sure you are in haste to send to Faulkland. There—through my room you'll find another staircase.

JUL. Adieu!

[Exit, R.]

LYD. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books. Quick, quick. Fling "Peregrine Pickle" under the toilet—throw "Roderick Random" into the closet—put "The Innocent Adultery" into "The whole Duty of Man"—thrust "Lord Aimworth" under the sofa—cram "Ovid" behind the bolster—there—put "The Man of Feeling" into your pocket. Now for them?

[Exit Lucy, L.]

*Enter MRS. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY
ABSOLUTE, L.*

MRS. M. There, Sir Anthony, there stands the deliberate simpleton, who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

LYD. Madam, I thought you once—

MRS. M. You thought, miss! I don't know any business you have to think at all; thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is, that you would promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, from your memory.

LYD. Ah! madam! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. M. But I say it is, miss! there is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle, as if he had never existed; and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

LYD. What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

Mrs. M. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it. But, tell me, will you promise me to do as you're bid? Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

LYD. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that, had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. M. What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that, as both always wear off, 'tis safest, in matrimony, to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle, before marriage, as if he'd been a black-a-moor; and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made; and, when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed! But, suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

LYD. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. M. Take yourself to your room. You are fit company for nothing but your own ill humours.

LYD. Willingly, ma'am; I cannot change for the worse.
[Exit, R.]

Mrs. M. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

SIR ANTH. It is notto be wondered at, ma'am; all that is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop; I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library: she had a book

in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers : from that moment, I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

MRS. M. Those are vile places , indeed !

SIR ANTH. Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge !—It blossoms through the year ! And, depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

MRS. M. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony; you surely speak laconically.

SIR ANTH. Why Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

MRS. M. Observe me, Sir Anthony—I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman :—for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning; nor will it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments; but, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts; and, as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries : above all, she should be taught orthodoxy. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know; and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

SIR ANTH. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you: though I must confess, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question. But, to the more important point in debate—you say you have no objection to my proposal?

MRS. M. None, I assure you. I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres; and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

SIR ANTH. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly. He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

MRS. M. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

SIR ANTH. Objection!—Let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop; Jack knows, that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in his younger days, 'twas, “Jack, do this,”—if he demurred, I knocked him down; and, if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

MRS. M. Ay, and the properest way, o'my conscience!—Nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity. Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations; and I hope you will represent her to the Captain as an object not altogether illegible.

SIR ANTH. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently. I must leave you; and, let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl—take my advice, keep a tight hand—if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and, if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive now she'd come about.

[Exit, L.]

MRS. M. Well, at any rate, I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition—she has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Sure, Lucy can't have betray'd me!—No, the girl is such a simpleton, I should have made her confess it. Lucy! Lucy! [Calls.] Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter Lucy, R.

LUCY. Did you call, ma'am?

MRS. M. Yes, girl. Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

LUCY. No indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. M. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned—

LUCY. O gemini ! I'd sooner cut my tongue out !

Mrs. M. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on.

LUCY. No, ma'am.

Mrs. M. So, come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius—[*Crosses to R.*—but mind, Lucy, if ever you betray what you are entrusted with (unless it be other people's secrets to me), you forfeit my malevolence for ever; and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality. [*Exit, R.*

LUCY. Ha ! ha ! ha ! So, my dear simplicity, let me give you a little respite; [*Altering her manner*—let girls in my station be as fond as they please of being expert and knowing in their trust, commend me to a mask of silliness, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account have I turned my simplicity lately : [*Looks at a paper.*] “ For abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign ! in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve—gowns, five ; hats, ruffles, caps, etc. etc. numberless. From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half. Item, from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her ”—when I found matters were likely to be discovered—“ two guineas and a French shawl. Item from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters ”—which I never delivered,—“ two guineas and a pair of buckles. Item, from Sir Lucius O'Trigger, three crowns, two gold pocket pieces, and a silver snuff-box ! ”—Well done, simplicity ! yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe, that he was corresponding, not with the aunt, but with the niece ; for, though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. [*Exit, R.*

ACRES. Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man!

FAULK. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, sir; I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire!

ACRES. Never knew her better in my life, sir; never better. Odds blushes and blooms! she has been as healthy as the German Spa.

FAULK. Indeed! I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

ACRES. False, false, sir; only said to vex you: quite the reverse, I assure you. *[Retires up the stage.]*

FAULK. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me; I had almost fretted myself ill.

CAPT. A. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick.

FAULK. No, no, you misunderstand me: yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love. Now confess—is't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health?

CAPT. A. Oh, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure!

ACRES. Good apartments, Jack. *[Coming forward.]*

FAULK. Well, sir, but you was saying that Miss Melville has been so exceedingly well—what then, she has been merry and gay, I suppose?—always in spirits, hey?

ACRES. Merry! odds crickets! she has been the belle and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining! so full of wit and humour!

[Retires up the stage.]

FAULK. By my soul! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome?—What! happy, and I away!

CAPT. A. Just now, you were only apprehensive for your mistress's spirits.

FAULK. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company?

CAPT. A. No, indeed, you have not.

FAULK. Have I been lively and entertaining?

CAPT. A. Oh, upon my word, I acquit you.

FAULK. Have I been full of wit and humour?

CAPT. A. No, faith, to do you justice, you have been confoundedly stupid indeed.

ACRES. What's the matter with the gentleman?

CAPT. A. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland?

FAULK. Yes, yes, she has a happy disposition!

ACRES. [*Crosses to c.*] That she has, indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp; squallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—there was this time month—odds minums and crotchets! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert! [*Sings.*] *My heart's my own, my will is free.* That's very like her. [*Goes up the stage.*]

FAULK. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my happiness on such a trifle! 'Sdeath! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to sooth her light heart with catches and glees! What can you say to this, sir?

CAPT. A. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, sir.

FAULK. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy; no, I am glad of that—but she has been dancing too, I doubt not.

ACRES. [*In the c.*] What does the gentleman say about dancing?

CAPT. A. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as she sings.

ACRES. Ay, truly does she—there was at our last race ball——

FAULK. Hell and the devil! [*ACRES goes suddenly to R.*] There! there—I told you so! I told you so! oh! she thrives in my absence! Dancing!

CAPT. A. For heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't expose yourself so! Suppose she has danced, what then? does not the ceremony of society often oblige—

FAULK. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as

you say—for form's sake. [*Crosses to c.*] I say Mr.——
Mr.——What's his d—d name?

CAPT. A. Acres, Acres.

FAULK. O ay, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a minuet—hey?

ACRES. Oh, I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of, was her country dancing: odds swim-mings! she has such an air with her!

FAULK. Now, disappointment on her! defend this, Absolute! why don't you defend this? country dances! jigs and reels! am I to blame now! A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say, I should not have regarded a minuet—but country dances! Z——ds, had she made one in a cotillion—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night! to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous psalming puppies! to show paces, like a managed filly! Oh, Jack, there never can be but one man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a country dance; and even then, the rest of the couples should be her great uncles and aunts!

[*Crosses to l.*

CAPT. A. Ay, to be sure! grandfathers and grandmothers!

FAULK. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, it will spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain!—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it.

[*Going;*

CAPT. A. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

FAULK. D—n his news.

CAPT. A. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland! Five minutes since —“nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness!”

ACRES. The gentleman wasn't angry at my praising his mistress, was he?

CAPT. A. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

ACRES. You don't say so? Ha! ha! jealous of me?—that's a good joke!

CAPT. A. There's nothing strange in that, Bob; let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

ACRES. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! mischief—ha! ha! but you know I am not my own property! my dear Lydia has forestalled me. She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but, odds frogs and tambours! I sha'n't take matters so here—now ancient madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's master—I shall straitway cashier the hunting-frock, and render my leather breeches incapable—My hair has been in training some time.

CAPT. A. Indeed!

ACRES. Ay—and tho'f the side-curls are a little restive, my hind part takes it very kindlyly.

CAPT. A. Oh, you'll polish, I doubt not.

ACRES. Absolutely I propose so—then if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

CAPT. A. Spoke like a man—but pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing——

ACRES. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't it?—I didn't invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia, a great scholar, I assure you, says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable; because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, by Jove! or by Bacchus or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the sentiment;—so that to swear with propriety, says; my little major the "oath should be anecho to the andsense;" this we call the oath referential, or sentimental swearing—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

CAPT. A. Very genteel, and very new indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

ACRES. Ay, ay, the best terms will grow obsolete—Dams have had their day.

Enter FAG, R. D.

FAG. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you—Shall I show him into the parlour?

CAPT. A. Ay—you may.

ACRES. Well, I must be gone—

CAPT. A. Stay : who is it, Fag?

FAG. Your father, sir.

CAPT. A. You puppy, why didn't you shew him up directly?

[Exit FAG, R. D.]

ACRES. You have business with Sir Anthony.—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop, at my lodgings, I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.—Adieu, Jack, we must meet at night, when you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

[Exit, R.]

CAPT. A. That I will, with all my heart. Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter SIR ANTHONY, R. D.

Sir, I am delighted to see you here, and looking so well!—your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

SIR ANTH. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

CAPT. A. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

SIR ANTH. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it; for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

CAPT. A. Pardon me, sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty, and I pray fervently that you may continue so.

SIR ANTH. I hope your prayers may be heard with all

my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time.—Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

CAPT. A. Sir, you are very good.

SIR ANTH. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world.—I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

CAPT. A. Sir, your kindness overpowers me.—Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

SIR ANTH. Oh, that shall be as your wife chooses.

CAPT. A. My wife, sir!

SIR ANTH. Ay, ay, settle that between you—settle that between you.

CAPT. A. A wife, sir, did you say?

SIR ANTH. Ay, a wife—why, did I not mention that before

CAPT. A. Not a word of her, sir.

SIR ANTH. Odd so!—I musn't forget her though—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife; but I suppose that makes no difference?

CAPT. A. Sir! sir! you amaze me!

SIR ANTH. Why, what the devil's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

CAPT. A. I was, sir.—You talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

SIR ANTH. Why, what difference does that make?—Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

CAPT. A. Pray, sir, who is the lady?

SIR ANTH. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love and to marry her directly.

CAPT. A. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable; to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of?

SIR ANTH. I am sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to object to a lady you know nothing of.

CAPT. A. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

SIR ANTH. Hark ye, Jack;—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itself, when I am not thwarted; no one more easily led, when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

CAPT. A. Sir, I must repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

SIR ANTH. Now d—n me! if ever I call you Jack again while I live!

CAPT. A. Nay, sir,—but hear me.

SIR ANTH. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word; not one word! so give me your promise by a word. And I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog—if you don't, by——

CAPT. A. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness!

SIR ANTH. Z—ds, sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder: she shall be as crooked as the crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's Museum. She shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew. She shall be all this, sirrah! yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty.

CAPT. A. This is reason and moderation indeed!

SIR ANTH. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes.

CAPT. A. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humour for mirth in my life.

SIR ANTH. 'Tis false, sir; I know you are laughing in your sleeve; I know you'll grin when I am gone, sirrah!

CAPT. A. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

SIR ANTH. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence, if you please—it won't do with me, I promise you.

CAPT. A. Indeed, sir, I was never cooler in my life.

SIR ANTH. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog—but it won't do.

CAPT. A. Nay, sir, upon my word—

SIR ANTH. So you will fly out! can't you be cool, like

me? What the devil good can passion do? Passion is of no service, you impudent, insolent, over-bearing reprobate! —There, you sneer again!—don't provoke me! but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog! you play upon the meekness of my disposition! Yet, take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last! —but mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do every thing on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you,—if not, z—ds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me; don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest. I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and d—n me! if ever I call you, Jack again! *[Exit, R. D.]*

CAPT. A. Mild, gentle, considerate father! I kiss your hands.

Enter FAG, R. D.

FAG. Assuredly, sir, your father is wroth to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time, muttering, growling, and thumping the banisters all the way; I, and the cook's dog, stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my master; then kicking the poor turnspit into the area, d—ns us all for a puppy triumvirate!—Upon my credit, sir, were I in your place, and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

CAPT. A. Cease your impertinence, sir—did you come in for nothing more? Stand out of the way.

[Pushes him aside, and exit, R. D.]

FAG. So! Sir Anthony trims my master: he is afraid to reply to his father, then vents his spleen on poor Fag! When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another, who happens to come in the way, shows the worst of temper, the basest—

Enter ERRAND BOY, R. D.

Boy. Mr. Fag! Mr, Fag! your master calls you.

FAG. Well! you little, dirty puppy, you needn't bawl so—the meanest disposition, the—

Boy. Quick, quick! Mr. Fag.

FAG. Quick, quick! you impudent jackanapes! am I to be commanded by you too, you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen bred— *[Kicks him off, R. D.]*

SCENE II.—*The North Parade.*

Enter LUCY, L.

LUCY. So, I shall have another rival to add to my mistress's list—Captain Absolute; however, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received due notice in form. Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his dear Dalia, as he calls her:—I wonder he's not here!

Enter SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER, R.

SIR L. Hah! my little ambassadress; upon my conscience I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half hour.

LUCY. *[Speaking simply.]* O gemini; and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

SIR L. 'Faith! may be, that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out, and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffe-house, and I chose the window, on purpose that I might not miss you.

LUCY. My stars! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

SIR L. Sure enough it must have been so; and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

LUCY. Yes, but I have—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

SIR L. 'Faith! I guessed you weren't come emptyhanded; well, let me see what the dear creature says.

LUCY. There, Sir Lucius. *[Gives him a letter.]*

SIR L. *[Reads]*. "Sir,—There is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination: such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O' Trigger." Very pretty upon my word! "Female punctuation forbids me to say more! yet, let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections.

"Yours, while meretricious,

"DELIA."

Upon my conscience! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language! 'Faith! she's quite the queen of the dictionary; for the devil a word dare refuse coming at her call, though one would think it was quite out of hearing.

LUCY. Ay, sir a lady of her experience.

SIR L. Experience! what at seventeen?

LUCY. O, true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars! how she will read off hand!

SIR L. 'Faith she must be very deep read, to write this-way, though she is rather an arbitrary writer, too; for here a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom. However, when affection guides the pen, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

LUCY. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

SIR L. Oh, tell her, I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O' Trigger into the bargain! But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent, and do every thing fairly.

LUCY. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice.

SIR L. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it: I am so poor, that I can't afford to do a dirty action. If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure. However, my pretty

girl, [*Giving her money*] here's a lit something to buy you a ribband; and meet me in the evening, and I will give you an answer to this. So, hussy, take a kiss beforehand, to put you in mind. [*Kisses her.*]

LUCY. O lud! Sir Lucius—I never see such a gemman! My lady won't like you if you are so impudent.

SIR L. 'Faith she will, Lucy—that same—pho! what's the name of it?—modesty!—is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked: so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her fifty, my dear.

LUCY. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

SIR L. Ah, then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth presently.

LUCY. For shame now; here is some one coming.

SIR L. O 'faith, I'll quiet your conscience!

[*Sees FAG.—Exit, singing, R.*]

Enter FAG.

FAG. So, so, ma'am; I humbly beg pardon.

LUCY. O lud! now, Mr. Fag—you flurry one so.

FAG. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please. You play false with us, madam. I saw you give the baronet a letter. My master shall know this; and if he don't call him out—I will.

LUCY. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty! That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton. She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

FAG. How! what taste some people have! Why I suppose I have walked by her window a hundred times. But what says our young lady?—any message to my master?

LUCY. Sad news, Mr. Fag! A worse rival than Acres! Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

FAG. What, Captain Absolute?

LUCY. Even so.—I overheard it all.

FAG. Ha! ha! ha! very good, 'faith! Good b'ye, Lucy; I must away with this news. [*Crosses to R.*]

LUCY. Well, you may laugh, but it is true, I assure you, [*Going L. H.*] But, Mr. Fag, tell your master not to be cast down by this.

FAG. Oh, he'll be so disconsolate!

LUCY. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

FAG. Never fear—never fear.

LUCY. Be sure, bid him keep up his spirits.

FAG. We will—we will.

[*Exeunt FAG, R. LUCY, L.*]

ACT. III.

SCENE I.—*The North Parade.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, L.

CAPT. A. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed! Whimsical enough, 'faith! My father wants to force me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with! He must not know of my connexion with her yet awhile. He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters; however, I'll read my recantation instantly. My conversion is something sudden, indeed; but I can assure him, it is very sincere. So, so, here he comes: he looks plaguy gruff.

[*Steps aside, L.*]

Enter SIR ANTHONY, R.

SIR ANTH. No—I'll die sooner than forgive him! Die, did I say? I'll live these fifty years to plague him. At our last meeting, his impudence had almost put me out of temper—an obstinate—passionate—self-willed boy! Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters! for putting him at twelve years old into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a year, besides his pay, ever since! But I have done with him—he's any body's son for me—I never will see him more—never—never—never—never.

CAPT. A. Now for a penitential face!

[*Comes forward on the L.*]

SIR ANTH. Fellow, get out of my way! [*Crosses to R.*]

CAPT. A. Sir, you see a penitent before your

SIR ANTH. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

CAPT. A. A sincere penitent. I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

SIR ANTH. What's that?

CAPT. A. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and considering on your past goodness, and kindness, and condescension to me.

SIR ANTH. Well, sir?

CAPT. A. I have been likewise weighing, and balancing, what you were pleased to mention, concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

SIR ANTH. Why, now you talk sense, absolute sense! I never heard any thing more sensible in my life. Confound you! you shall be Jack again.

CAPT. A. I am happy in the appellation.

SIR ANTH. Why then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented me telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare. What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

CAPT. A. Languish! What the Languishes of Worcestershire?

SIR ANTH. Worcestershire! No. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop, and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country, just before you were last ordered to your regiment?

CAPT. A. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet stay, I think I do recollect something—Languish—Languish—She squints, don't she? A little red-haired girl?

SIR ANTH. Squints! A red-haired girl! Z——ds! no!

CAPT. A. Then I must have forgot! it can't be the same person.

SIR ANTH. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

CAPT. A. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent; if I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

SIR ANTH. Nay, but Jack, such eyes! such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! Not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks! Jack! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips! O, Jack, lips, smiling at their own indiscretion! and, if not smiling, more sweetly pouting—more lovely in sullenness! Then, Jack, her neck! O, Jack! Jack!

CAPT. A. And which is to be mine, sir, the niece or the aunt?

SIR ANTH. Why, you unfeeling insensible puppy, I despise you. When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket! the aunt, indeed! Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched any thing old or ugly to gain an empire.

CAPT. A. Not to please your father, sir?

SIR ANTH. To please my father—Z——ds! not to please—O, my father—Odso!—yes, yes; if my father, indeed, had desired—that's quite another matter.—Though he wasn't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

CAPT. A. I dare say not, sir?

SIR ANTH. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

CAPT. A. Sir, I repeat it, if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind—now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back; and, though one eye may be very agreeable, yet, as the prejudice has always run in favour of two, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

SIR ANTH. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you are an anchorite! A vile, insensible stock! You a soldier! you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on! Odds life, I have a great mind to marry the girl myself!

CAPT. A. I am entirely at your disposal, sir; if you

should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the aunt; or if you should change your mind, and take the old lady, 'tis the same to me, I'll marry the niece.

SIR ANTH. Upon my word, Jack, thou art either a very great hypocrite, or—but, come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie—I'm sure it must—come now, d—n your demure face; come, confess, Jack, you have been lying—han't you? You have been playing the hypocrite, hey? I'll never forgive you, if you ha'nt been lying and playing the hypocrite.

CAPT. A. I'm sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

SIR ANTH. Hang your respect and duty! But come along with me. [*Crosses to L.*] I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly. Her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, 'egad, I'll marry the girl myself. [*Exeunt, L.*]

SCENE II.—JULIA'S Dressing-Room.

Enter FAULKLAND.

FAULK. She told me Julia would return directly: I wonder she is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met! How delicate was the warmth of her expressions! I was ashamed to appear less happy, though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding, Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations: yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so very happy in my absence. She is coming—yes, I know the nimbleness of her tread, when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter JULIA , R. D.

JUL. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

FAULK. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome, restrained, as we were, by the presence of a third person?

JUL. Oh, Faulkland! when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I have discovered something of coolness in your first salutation.

FAULK. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I was rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health: sure I had no cause for coldness.

JUL. Nay, then, I see you have taken something ill; you must not conceal from me what it is.

FAULK. Well, then, shall I own to you, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was somewhat damped, by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire: on your mirth—your singing—dancing—and I know not what: for such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment in your absence, as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear, that steals down the cheek of parting lovers, is a compact, that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

JUL. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing, minute caprice! Can the idle reports of a sylly boor weigh in your breast against my tried affection?

FAULK. They have no weight with me, Julia: no, no, I am happy, if you have been so—yet only say that you did not sing with mirth—say that you thought of Faulkland in the dance.

JUL. I never can be happy in your absence. If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you, when I say, that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

FAULK. You were ever all goodness to me! Oh, I

am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

JUL. If ever without such cause from you, as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude!

FAULK. Ah, Julia! that last word is grating to me! I would I had no title to your gratitude! Search your heart, Julia: perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but a warm effusion of a too thankful heart!

JUL. For what quality must I love you?

FAULK. For no quality: to regard me for any quality of mind or understanding, were only to esteem me! And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation there for any part of your affection.

JUL. Where nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it as misplaced. I have seen men, who in this vain article, perhaps, might rank above you; but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

FAULK. Now, this is not well from you, Julia, I despise person in a man, yet, if you love me as I wish, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none so fair.

JUL. I see you are determined to be unkind—The contract, which my poor father bound us in, gives you more than a lover's privilege.

FAULK. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought or promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

JUL. Then try me now—Let us be free as strangers as to what is past: my heart will not feel more liberty.

FAULK. There, now! so hasty, Julia! so anxious to be free! if your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loose your hold, even though I wished it!

JUL. Oh, you torture me to the heart! I cannot bear it!

FAULK. I do not mean to distress you: if I loved you

less, I should never give you an uneasy moment. I would not boast, yet let me say, that I have neither age, person, nor character, to found dislike on; my fortune such, as few ladies could be charged with indiscretion in the match. O Julia! when love receives such countenance from prudence, nice minds will be suspicious of its birth.

JUL. I know not whither your insinuations would tend; but as they seem pressing to insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so—I have given no cause for this!

[*Exit crying R. D.*

FAULK. In tears! stay, Julia—stay, but for a moment—The door is fastened! Julia! my soul! but for one moment!—I hear her sobbing! 'Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus!—yet stay—Ay, she is coming now: how little resolution there is in women! how a few soft words can turn them! [*Sits down and sings.* No, Z——ds! she's not coming, nor don't intend it, I suppose! This is not steadiness, but obstinacy! Yet I deserve it. What, after so long an absence, to quarrel with her tenderness! 'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated, and when I distress her so again, may I lose her for ever.

[*Exit, L.*

SCENE III.—*Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.*

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, with a Letter in her hand,
CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE *following, L.*

MRS. M. Your being Sir Anthony's son, Captain, would itself be a sufficient accommandation; but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

CAPT. A. Permit me to say, madam, that as I have never yet had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair, at present, is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop, of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

MRS. M. Sir, you do me infinite honour! I beg, Captain, you'll be seated.—[*Both sit*]—Ah! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman! few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman! Men have no sense, now, but for the worthless flower of beauty.

CAPT. A. It is but too true, indeed, ma'am; yet I fear our ladies should share the blame; they think our admiration of beauty so great, that knowledge, in them, would be superfluous. Thus, like garden trees, they seldom show fruit, till time has robbed them of the more specious blossoms: few, like Mrs. Malaprop, and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once.

MRS. M. Sir, you overpower me with good breeding—He is the very pine-apple of politeness! You are not ignorant, Captain, that this giddy girl has, somehow, contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eves-dropping ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows any thing of.

CAPT. A. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before. I'm not at all prejudiced against her on that account. But it must be very distressing, indeed, to you, ma'am.

MRS. M. Oh, it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree!—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him; but behold, this very day, I have interceded another letter from the fellow—I believe I have it in my pocket.

CAPT. A. O, the devil! my last note!

[*Aside.*

MRS. M. Ay, here it is.

CAPT. A. Ay, my note, indeed! O, the little traitress, Lucy!

[*Aside.*

MRS. M. There, perhaps you may know the writing.

[*Gives him the letter.*

CAPT. A. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I certainly must have seen this hand before.

MRS. M. Nay, but read it, Captain.

CAPT. A. [*Reads.*] “ My soul's idol, my adored Lydia! ”—Very tender, indeed!

MRS. M. Tender! ay, and profane too, o'my conscience!

CAPT. A. "I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival"—

MRS. M. That's you, sir.

CAPT. A. "Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honour." Well, that's handsome enough.

MRS. M. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so.

CAPT. A. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am.

MRS. M. But go on, sir—you'll see presently.

CAPT. A. "As for the old weatherbeaten she-dragon, who guards you"—Who can he mean by that?

MRS. M. Me, sir—me—he means me there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

CAPT. A. Impudent scoundrel!—"it shall go hard but I will elude her vigilance; as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity, which makes her dress up her coarse features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand"—

MRS. M. There, sir, an attack upon my language! what do you think of that?—an aspiration upon my parts of speech! was ever such a brute! Sure if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs.

CAPT. A. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see—"same ridiculous vanity"—

MRS. M. You need not read it again, sir!

CAPT. A. I beg pardon, ma'am—"does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration"—an impudent coxcomb—"so that I have a scheme to see you shortly, with the old Harri-dan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews."—Was ever such assurance!

MRS. M. Did you ever hear any thing like it? [*They rise.*] He'll elude my vigilance, will he?—yes, yes!—ha! ha! he's very likely to enter these doors!—we'll try who can plot best!

CAPT. A. So we will, ma'am—so we will.—Ha! ha!

ha! a conceited puppy! ha! ha! ha!—Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape—while I, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. M. I am delighted with the scheme; never was any thing better perpetrated.

CAPT. A. But, pray, could I not see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. M. Why, I don't know; I doubt she is not prepared for a visit of this kind. There is a decorum in these matters.

CAPT. A. O Lord, she won't mind me!—only tell her, Beverley—

Mrs. M. Sir!

CAPT. A. Gently, good tongue! [*Aside.*

Mrs. M. What did you say of Beverley?

CAPT. A. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below—she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. M. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves; besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha! Let him if he can, I say again. Lydia, come down here! [*Calling.*] He'll make me a go-between in their interviews!—ha! ha! ha! Come down, I say, Lydia! I don't wonder at your laughing—ha! ha! ha! hi. impudence is truly ridiculous.

CAPT. A. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am!—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. M. The little hussy won't hear. Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—she shall know that Captain Absolute is come to wait on her. And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

CAPT. A. As you please, ma'am.

Mrs. M. For the present, Captain, your servant—Ah, you've not done laughing yet, I see—elude my vigilance! yes, yes—Ha! ha! ha! ha! [*Exit, R.*

CAPT. A. Ha! ha! ha! one would think, now, that I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize with security; but such is Lydia's caprice, that, to deceive, were probably to lose her. I'll see whether she knows me. [*Walks aside, surveying the Pictures.*]

Enter LYDIA, R.

LYD. What a scene am I now to go through! surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart. I have heard of girls persecuted, as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favoured lover, to the generosity of his rival: suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival—an officer too! but, oh, how unlike my Beverley! I wonder he don't begin—truly, he seems a very negligent wooer!—quite at his ease, upon my word! I'll speak first—first—Mr. Absolute!

CAPT. A. Ma'am.

[*Turns round.*]

LYD. O heavens! Beverley!

CAPT. A. Hush! hush, my life! softly, be not surprised!

LYD. I am so antonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed! For heaven's sake, how came you here?

CAPT. A. Briefly. I have deceived your aunt. I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and, contriving to have him kept away, have passed myself on her for Captain Absolute.

LYD. Oh, charming!—and she really takes you for young Absolute?

CAPT. A. Oh, she's convinced of it.

LYD. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing, to think how her sagacity is over-reached.

CAPT. A. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur; then let me now conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserved persecution, and, with a licensed warmth, plead for my reward.

LYD. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that

portion of my paltry wealth? that burden on the wings of love?

CAPT. A. Oh, come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness! Bring no portion to me but thy love! 'twill be generous in you, Lydia; for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

LYD. How persuasive are his words! how charming will poverty be with him! [Aside.]

CAPT. A. By heavens, I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say, the world affords no smile to me but here.

[Embracing her.]
If she holds out now, the devil is in it. [Aside.]

LYD. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes—but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis. [Aside.]

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, listening, &c.

MRS. M. I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself. [Aside.]

CAPT. A. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

MRS. M. Warmth abated?—so?—she has been in a passion, I suppose. [Aside.]

LYD. No; nor ever can while I have life.

MRS. M. An ill-temper'd little devil!—She'll be in a passion all her life, will she? [Aside.]

LYD. Let her choice be Captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

MRS. M. I am astonished at her assurance!—to his face—this to his face! [Aside.]

CAPT. A. Thus, then, let me enforce my suit.

[Kneeling.]

MRS. M. Ay—poor young man!—down on his knees, entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer. [Aside.]
—Why, thou vixen!—I have overheard you.

CAPT. A. Oh, confound her vigilance! [Aside.]

MRS. M. Captain Absolute—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

CAPT. A. So, all's safe I find. [*Aside.*] I have hopes madam, that time will bring the young lady—

MRS. M. O, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile.

LYD. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

MRS. M. Why thou unblushing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face, that you loved another better?—didn't you say you never would be his?

LYD. No, madam, I did not.

MRS. M. Good heavens, what assurance!—Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman! Didn't you boast that Beverley—that stroller, Beverley—possessed your heart? Tell me that, I say.

LYD. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but Beverley—

MRS. M. Hold!—hold, assurance!—you shall not be so rude.

CAPT. A. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech:—she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt me in the least, I assure you.

MRS. M. You are too good, captain—too amiably patient:—but come with me, miss—let us see you again soon, captain—remember what we have fixed.

CAPT. A. I shall, ma'am.

MRS. M. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

LYD. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bev—
[*Mrs. M. prevents her speaking.*]

MRS. M. Hussy!—Come along—come along.

[*Exeunt* CAPT. ABSOLUTE, L. *kissing his hand to*
LYDIA—MRS. MALAPROP and LYDIA, R

SCÈNE IV.—ACRES' Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID *discovered*; ACRES *just dressed*

ACRES. Indeed, David—dress does make a difference, David.

DAV. 'Tis all in all, I think—difference? why, an' you were to go now to Clod Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, 'Lard presarve me!' our dairy maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester, your honour's favourite, would blush like my waistcoat. Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether Phillis would wag a hair of her tail?

ACRES. Ay, David, there's nothing like polishing.

DAV. So I says of your honour's boots, but the boy never heeds me!

ACRES. But David, has Mr. de la Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chasing, and boring.

DAV. I'll call again, sir. [*Crosses to L.*

ACRES. Do; and see if there are any letters for me at the Post-office.

DAV. I will. By the mass, I can't help looking at your head! if I hadn't been at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself..

[*Exit DAVID, R.*

[*ACRES comes forward with a dancing step.*

ACRES. Sink, slide—coupee—Confound the first inventors of cotillions, say I!—they are as bad as algebra, to us country gentlemen—I can walk a minuet easy enough, when I am forced—and I have been accounted a good stick in a country dance. Odds jigs and tabors!—I never valued your cross-over to couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the country!—but these outlandish heathen allemandes and cotillions are quite beyond me!—I shall never prosper at them, that's sure—mine are true-born English legs—they don't understand their cursed French lingo! their *pas* this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other? damn me! my feet don't like to be called paws!

Enter SERVANT, R.

SER. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you'
SIR.

ACRES. Show him in.

[*Exit SERVANT, R.*]

Enter SIR LUCIUS, R.

SIR L. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to see you.

ACRES. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

SIR L. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

ACRES. 'Faith, I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last!—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as a very ill-used gentleman.

SIR L. Pray, what is the cause?—I ask no names.

ACRES. Mark me, Sir Lucius; I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of. This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

SIR P. Very ill, upon my conscience!—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

ACRES. Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds slanders and lies, he must be at the bottom of it.

SIR L. A rival in the case, is there? and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

ACRES. Unfairly! to be sure he has, He never could have done it fairly.

SIR L. Then sure you know what is to be done!

ACRES. Not I, upon my soul!

SIR L. We wear no swords here, but you understand me?

ACRES. What! fight him!

SIR L. Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else?

ACRES. But he has given me no provocation.

SIR L. Now, I think he has given you the greatest

provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another, than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by, my soul; it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

ACRES. Breach of friendship! Ay, ay; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in all my life.

SIR L. That's no argument at all—he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

ACRES. 'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace; odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it!—But couldn't I contrive to have a little right on my side?

SIR L. What the devil signifies right when your honour is concerned? do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad swords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

ACRES. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching!—I certainly, do feel a kind of valour arising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say. Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

SIR L. Ah, my little friend! if we had Blunderbuss Hall here—I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the New Room, every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank heaven, our honour and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

ACRES. Oh, Sir Lucius, I have had ancestors too!—every man of them colonel or captain in the militia!—odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it. The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast!—Z—s! as the man in the play says, 'I could do such deeds'—

SIR L. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

ACRES. I must be in a passion, Sir Lucius—I must be in a rage—Dear Sir Lucius, let me be in a rage, if you love me. Come, here's pen and paper. [*Sits.*] I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand however.

SIR L. Pray compose yourself. [*Sits down.*]

ACRES. Come—now, shall I begin with an oath, Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme?

SIR L. Pho! pho! do the thing decently, and like a Christian. Begin now—“Sir,t’—

ACRES. That's too civil by half.

SIR L. “To prevent the confusion that might arise”—

ACRES. Well—

SIR L. “From our both addressing the same lady”—

ACRES. Ay—“both undressing the same lady”—there's the reason—“same lady”—Well—

SIR L. “I shall expect the honour of your company”—

ACRES. Z—ds! I'm not asking him to dinner!—

SIR L. Pray, be easy.

ACRES. Well; then, “honour of your company”—Does company begin with a C. or a K?

SIR L. “To settle our pretensions”—

ACRES. Well.

SIR L. Let me see—ay, King's Mead fields will do—“in King's Mead fields.”

ACRES. So, that's done. Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest, a hand and dagger, shall be the seal.

SIR L. You see, now, this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

ACRES. Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

SIR L. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time. Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if you can; then, let the worst come of it, t'will be off your mind to-morrow.

ACRES. Very true.

SIR L. So I shall see nothing more of you , unless it be by letter , till the evening—I would do myself the honour to carry your message ; but , to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here who put a jest on me lately at the expense of my country , and I only want to fall in with the gentleman to call him out.

ACRES. By my valour , I should like to see you fight first ! Odds life , I should like to see you kill him , if it was only to get a little lesson !

SIR L. I shall be very proud of instructing you. Well, for the present—but remember now , when you meet your antagonist, do every thing in a mild and agreeable manner. Let your courage be as keen , but at the same time as polished as your sword.

[*Exeunt*—SIR LUCIUS , R. ACRES , L.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—ACRES' Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID discovered.

DAV. Then , by the mass , sir , I would do no such thing ! ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom should make me fight when I wasn't so minded. Oons ! what will the old lady say when she hears o't ?

ACRES. But my honour , David , my honour ! I must be very careful of my honour.

DAV. Ay , by the mass , and I would be very careful of it , and I think in return my honour couldn't do less than to be very careful of me.

ACRES. Odds blades ! David , no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honour !

DAV. I say , then , it would be but civil in honour never to risk the loss of a gentleman.—Look ye , master, this honour seems to be to be a marvellous false friend ; ay , truly , a very courtier-like servant. Put the case, I was a gentleman (which , thank heaven , no one can say of me-) ; well—my honour makes me quarrel with

another gentleman of my acquaintance. So—we fight. (Pleasant enough that.) Boh ! I kill him—(the more's my luck.) Now , pray , who gets the profit of it?—why , my honour. But , put the case that he kills me ! by the mass ! I go to the worms , and my honour whips over to my enemy.

ACRES. No , David , in that case !—Odds crowns and laurels ! your honour follows you to the grave !

DAV. Now , that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

ACRES. Z—ds ! David , you are a coward !—It doesn't become my valour to listen to you.—What , shall I disgrace my ancestors !—Think of that , David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors !

DAV. Under favour , the surest way of not disgracing them , is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look ye , now , master , to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think it might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks ; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

ACRES. But , David , now , you don't think there is such very , very—great danger , hey ?—Odds life ! people often fight without any mischief done !

DAV. By the mass , I think 'tis ten to one against you ! Oons ! here to meet some lion-headed fellow , I war-rant , with his d—nd double barrell'd swords and out-and-thrust pistols ! Lord bless us ! it makes me tremble to think on't—those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons ! well , I never could abide them !—from a child I never could fancy them !—I suppose there an't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol !

ACRES. Z—ds ! I won't be afraid—odds fire and fury ! you sha'nt make me afraid.—Here is the challenge , and I have sent for my dear friend , Jack Absolute , to carry it for me.

DAV. Ay , i'the name of mischief , let him be the messenger.—For my part , I would'nt lend a hand to it , for

the best horse in your stable. By the mass ! It don't look like another letter !—it is , as I may say , a designing and malicious-looking letter ! and I warrant smells of gunpowder , like a soldier's pouch ! Oons ! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off !

ACRES. Out, you poltroon !—you ha n't the valour of a grasshopper.

DAV. Well , I say no more—'twill be sad news , to be sure , at Clod-Hall !—but I ha' done.—How Phillis will howl when she hears of it !—ay , poor bitch , she little thinks what shooting her master's going after !—and I warrant old Crop , who has carried your honour , field and road , these ten years , will curse the hour he was born !—

[*Whimpering.*

ACRES. It won't do , David—I am determined to fight , so get along , you coward , while I'm in the mind.

Enter SERVANT , R.

SER. Captain Absolute , sir.

ACRES. O ! show him up. [*Exit SERVANT , R.*

DAV. Well , heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

ACRES. What's that ?—Don't provoke me , David !

DAV. Good bye , master, [*Sobbing.*

ACRES. Get along , you cowardly , dastardly , croaking raven. [*Exit DAVID , L.*

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE , R.

CAPT. A. What's the matter , Bob ?

ACRES. A vile , sheep-hearted blockhead !—If I hadn't the valour of St. George , and the dragon to boot—

CAPT. A. But what did you want with me , Bob ?

ACRES. Oh !—there— [*Gives him the challenge.*

CAPT. A. [*To Ensign BEVERLEY.*] So—what's going on now ! [*Aside.*] Well , what's this ?

ACRES. A challenge !

CAPT. A. Indeed !—Why , you won't fight him , will you , Bob ?

ACRES. 'Egad , but I will , Jack.—Sir Lucius has

wrought me to it. He has left me full of rage, and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

CAPT. A. But what have I to do with this ?

ACRES. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

CAPT. A. Well, give it me, and trust me he gets it.

ACRES. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

CAPT. A. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

ACRES. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend:—you couldn't be my second—could you, Jack?

CAPT. A. Why, no, Bob—not in this affair—it would not be quite so proper.

ACRES. Well, then, I must get my friend Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

CAPT. A. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter SERVANT, R.

SERV. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

CAPT. A. I'll come instantly. [*Exit SERVANT, R.*
Well, my little hero, success attend you. [*Going.*

ACRES. Stay, stay, Jack. If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

CAPT. A. To be sure I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

ACRES. Ay, do, do—and if that frightens him, 'egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

CAPT. A. I will, I will: I'll say you are call'd, in the country, "Fighting Bob."

ACRES. Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief: for I don't want to take is life, if I clear my honour.

CAPT. A. No!—that's very kind of you.

ACRES. Why, you don't wish me to kill him, do you, Jack?

CAPT. A. No, upon my soul, I do not. But a devil of a fellow, hey? [Going.]

ACRES. True, true—But stay—stay, Jack—you may add, that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage.

CAPT. A. I will, I will.

ACRES. Remember, Jack—a determined dog.

CAPT. A. Ay, ay, “Fighting Bob.”

[*Exeunt*, ACRES, L. CAPT. ABSOLUTE, R.]

SCENE II.—MRS. MALAPROP'S Lodgings.

Enter MRS. MALAPROP. and LYDIA, R.

MRS. M. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to in him?—Isn't he a handsome man?—tell me that. A genteel man? A pretty figure of a man?

LYD. She little thinks whom she is praising. [*Aside*,] So is Beverley, ma'am.

MRS. M. No caparisons, miss, if you please. Caparisons don't become a young woman. No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman.

LYD. Ay, the Captain Absolute you have seen.

[*Aside*.]

MRS. M. Then he's so well bred;—so full of alacrity and adulation!—He has so much to say for himself, in such good language too. His physiognomy so grammatical; then his presence so noble! I protest, when I saw him I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:—“Hesperian curls—the front of Job himself! an eye, like March, to threaten at command!—a station, like Harry Mercury, new”—Something about kissing—on a hill—however, the similitude struck me directly!

LYD. How enraged she'll be presently, when she discovers her mistake!

[*Aside*.]

Enter SERVANT, L.

SERV. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below ma'am.

[Exit SERVANT, L.]
behaving as becomes
your good breeding, at least

my resolution—I shall
encouragement. but I won't even
into a chair, with her face

CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, L.

Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop; come to mitigate
unrelenting beauty,—and difficulty
I had to bring this fellow. I don't know what's
but if I had not held him by force, he'd
give me the slip.

You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in
I am ashamed for the cause! Lydia, Lydia,
pay your respects!

[Aside to her.]

I hope, madam, that miss Languish has re-
the worth of this gentleman, and the regard
aunt's choice, and my alliance. Now, Jack,

What the devil shall I do? [Aside to him.] You
won't even look at me whilst you are here,
wouldn't!—I told you so—Let me entreat
leave us together!

A. seems to expostulate with his father.
say, sir, I won't stir a foot yet.

am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my
my niece is very small. Turn round, Ly-

you! I don't flatter myself, that Miss Languish
cause I dislike she can have to my son?
you begins, Jack? Speak, your puppy—

possible, Sir Anthony, she can have

any. She will not say she has. Answer, hussy! why don't you answer? [*Aside to her.*

SIR ANTH. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness. Z—ds! sirrah! why don't you speak? [*Aside to him.*

CAPT. A. Hem! hem! Madam—hem! [*CAPT. ABSOLUTE attempts to speak, then returns to SIR ANTH.*] 'Faith! sir, I am so confounded!—and so—so confused! I told you I should be so, sir,—I knew it. The—the tremour of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

SIR ANTH. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it? Go up, and speak to her directly! [*CAPT. ABSOLUTE makes signs to MRS. MALAPROP to leave them together.*] What the devil are you at? unlock your jaws, sirrah, or— [*Aside to him.*

CAPT. A. [*Draws near LYDIA.*] Now heaven send she may be too sullen to look round! I must disguise my voice. [*Aside. Speaks in a low tone.*] Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? Will not—

SIR ANTH. What the devil ails the fellow? Why don't you speak out?—not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsy!

CAPT. A. The—the excess of my awe, and my—my modesty, quite choak me!

SIR ANTH. Ah! your modesty again! I'll tell you what, Jack: if you don't speak out directly and glibly too, I shall be in such a rage! Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favour us with something more than a side-front. [*MRS. MALAPROP seems to chide LYDIA.*

CAPT. A. So! all will out, I see! [*Goes up to LYDIA, speaks softly.*] Be not surprised, my Lydia, suppress all surprise at present.

LYD. [*Aside.*] Heavens! 'tis Beverley's voice!—[*Looks round by degrees, then starts up.*] Is this possible?—my Beverley! how can this be?—my Beverley!

CAPT. A. Ah! 'tis all over! [*Aside.*

SIR ANTH. Beverley!—the devil—Beverley! What can the girl mean? This is my son, Jack Absolute.

MRS. M. For shame , hussy ! for shame !—your head runs so on that fellow , that you have him always in your eyes ! beg Captain Absolute's pardon directly.

LYD. I see no Captain Absolute , but my loved Beverley !

SIR ANTH. Z—ds , the girl's mad ! her brain's turned by reading !

MRS. M. O' my conscience , I believe so !—what do you mean by Beverley , hussy ?—you saw Captain Absolute before to-day , there he is—your husband that shall be.

LYD. With all my soul , ma'am ; when I refuse my Beverley—

SIR ANTH. Oh ! she's as mad as Bedlam !—or has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick ! Come here , sirrah , who the devil are you ?

CAPT. A. 'Faith , sir , I am not quite clear myself ; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

SIR ANTH. Are you my son or not ?—answer for your mother , you dog , if you won't for me.

CAPT. A. Ye powers of impudence , befriend me !—
[*Aside.*] Sir Anthony , most assuredly I am your wife's son ; and that I sincerely believe myself to be yours also , I hope my duty has always shown. Mrs. Malaprop , I am your most respectful admirer , and shall be proud to add affectionate nephew ; I need not tell my Lydia that she sees her faithful Beverley , who knowing the singular generosity of her temper , assumed that name , and a station , which has proved a test of the most disinterested love , which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

LYD. So !—there will be no elopement after all !

[*Sullenly.*

SIR ANTH. Upon my soul , Jack ; thou art a very impudent fellow ! To do you justice , I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance !

CAPT. A. Oh , you flatter me , sir ; you compliment ; 'tis my modesty you know , sir ; modesty , that has stood in my way.

SIR ANTH. Well , I am glad you are not the dull insen-

sible varlet you pretend to be, however! I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog, I am. So this was your penitence, your duty, and obedience! I thought it was d—n'd sudden. You never heard their names before, not you! What, the Languishes of Worcestershire, hey? if you could please me in the affair, 'twas all you desired! Ah! you dissembling villain! What! [*Pointing to LYDIA*] she squints, don't she? a little red-haired girl! hey? Why, you hypocritical young rascal—I wonder you a'n't ashamed to hold up your head!

CAPT. A. 'Tis with difficulty, sir—I am confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

MRS. M. O lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me! hey! hey! what! captain, did you write the letters then? What!—am I to thank you for the elegant compilation of an "old weather-beaten she-dragon,"—hey? O mercy—was it you that reflected on my parts of speech?

CAPT. A. Dear sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last, if you don't assist me, I shall certainly not be able to stand it.

SIR ANTH. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive; odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden, that I could find in my heart to be so good-humoured! and so gallant!—hey! Mrs. Malaprop! Come, we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant! Jack—isn't the cheek as I said, hey?—and the eye, you rogue!—and the lip—hey? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—their's is the time of life for happiness! *Youth's the season made for joy—* [*Sings.*] Hey! Odd's life! I'm in such spirits—I don't know what I could not do! Permit me ma'am— [*Gives his hand to MRS. MALAPROP,*] [*Sings*]*—Tol de rol—'gad I should like to have a little fooling myself—Tol de rol! da rol!*

[*Exit, singing, and handing MRS. MALAPROP off,*
R.—LYDIA sits sullenly in her Chair.

CAPT. A. So much thought bodes me no good. [*Aside.*]
So grave Lydia!

LYD. Sir!

CAPT. A. So! 'egad! I thought as much! That d—'nd monosyllable has froze me? [*Aside.*] What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our friends' consent as in our mutual vows.

LYD. Friends' consent, indeed! [*Peevishly.*]

CAPT. A. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance; a little wealth and comfort may be endured after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as—

LYD. Lawyers! I hate lawyers!

CAPT. A. Nay then we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the license, and—

LYD. The license! I hate licenses!

CAPT. A. O, my love be not so unkind—thus let me entreat— [*Kneeling.*]

LYD. Pshaw! what signifies kneeling, when you know I must have you!

CAPT. A. [*Rising.*] Nay, madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you. If I have lost your heart, I resign the rest. 'Gad I must try what a little spirit will do. [*Aside.*]

LYD. [*Rising.*] Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating me like a child!—humouring my romance; and laughing, I suppose, at your success!

CAPT. A. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear—

LYD. So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them all—behold, my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation—and I am myself the only dupe at last! [*Walking about in a heat.*]—But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! [*Taking a Miniature from her bosom*]—

which I have worn , night and day , in spite of threats and entreaties !—There , sir , [*Flings it to him.*]—and be assured , I throw the original from my heart as easily.

CAPT. A. Nay , nay , ma'am , we will not differ as to that—here—[*Taking out a Picture.*]—here is Miss Lydia Languish. What a difference !—ay , there is the heavenly assenting smile , that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes !—those are the lips which sealed a vow , as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar !—and there the half-resentful blush , that would have checked the ardour of my thanks. Well , all that's past ; all over indeed ! There , madam , in beauty , that copy is not equal to you , but in my mind , its merit over the original , in being still the same , is such—that—I'll put it in my pocket. [*Puts it up again*

LYD. [*Softening.*] 'Tis your own doing , sir—I , I , I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

CAPT. A. Oh , most certainly : sure now , this is much better than being in love ! ha ! ha ! ha !—there's some spirit in this ! What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises ; all that's of no consequence , you know. To be sure people will say , that miss didn't know her own mind—but never mind that : or , perhaps , they may be ill-natured enough to hint , that the gentleman grew tired of the lady , and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

LYD. There's no bearing this insolence !

[*Bursts into tears.*

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and SIR ANTHONY , R.

MRS. M. [*Entering.*] Come , we must interrupt your billing and cooing awhile.

LYD. This is worse than your treachery and deceit , you are ingrate !

SIR ANTH. What the devil's the matter now ! Z—ds ! Mrs. Malaprop , this in the oddest billing and cooing ever heard ! but what the deuce is the meaning of it ? I'm quite astonished !

CAPT. A. Ask the lady, sir.

MRS. M. Oh, mercy! I'm quite analys'd, for my part! Why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

LYD. Ask the gentleman, ma'am.

SIR ANTH. Z—ds! I shall be in a frenzy! Why, Jack, you are not come out to be any one else, are you?

MRS. M. Ay, sir, there's no more trick, is there?—you are not, like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once, are you?

CAPT. A. You'll not let me speak—I say the lady can account for this much better than I can.

LYD. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again; there is the man—I now obey you: for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever.

[Exit, R.]

MRS. M. O mercy and miracles! what a turn here is! Why sure, Captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

SIR ANTH. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—Ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

CAPT. A. Nay, sir, upon my word—

SIR ANTH. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure 'twasso. Come, no excuses, Jack; why, your father, you rogue, was so before you; the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.

CAPT. A. By all that's good, sir—

SIR ANTH. Z—ds! say no more, I tell you—Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace. You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop; you must tell her, 'tis Jack's way—tell her, 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family! Come away, Jack, ha! ha! ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain!

[Pushes him out, L.]

MRS. M. Oh, Sir Anthony! O, fie, Captain!

[Exeunt, R.]

SCENE III.—*The North Parade.**Enter* SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER, R.

SIR L. I wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself. Upon my conscience these officers are always in one's way in love affairs; I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me! And I wonder too what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in them, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth. Hah, isn't this the Captain coming?—'faith, it is! There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! who the devil is he talking to?

[Retires, R.]

Enter CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, L.

CAPT. A. To what fine purpose have I been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul! a little gipsy! I did not think her romance could have made her so d—n'd absurd either. 'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humour in my life! I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

SIR L. O, 'faith! I'm in the luck of it, I never would have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be sure I'm just come in the nick! now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly. [*Aside. Advances to* CAPT. ABSOLUTE,] With regard to that matter, Captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

CAPT. A. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant: because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

SIR L. That's no reason; for give me leave to tell you, a man may think an untruth as well as speak one.

CAPT. A. Very true, sir; but if a man never utters his

thoughts, I should think they might stand a chance of escaping controversy.

SIR L. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

CAPT. A. Hark ye, Sir Lucius, if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview; for, what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

SIR L. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension—[*Bowing.*] you have named the very thing I would be at.

CAPT. A. Very well, sir—I shall certainly not baulk your inclinations—but I should be glad if you would please to explain your motives.

SIR L. Pray, sir, be easy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel, as it stands—we should only spoil it by trying to explain it. However, your memory is very short—or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week. So, no more, but name your time and place.

CAPT. A. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, the sooner the better; let it be this evening—here by the Spring Gardens. We shall scarcely be interrupted.

SIR L. 'Faith! that same interruption, in affairs of this nature, shows very great ill-breeding. I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness. However, if it's the same to you, Captain, I should take it as a particular kindness, if you'd let us meet in King's Mead-fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may despatch both matters at once.

CAPT. A. 'Tis the same to me exactly. A little after six, then, we will discuss this matter more seriously.

SIR L. If you please, sir; there will be very pretty small-sword light, though it won't do for a long shot. So that matter's settled; and my mind's at ease.

[*Exit, R.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—JULIA'S *Dressing-Room*.*Enter JULIA, R.*

JUL. How this message has alarmed me! what dreadful accident can he mean? why such charge to be alone? O Faulkland! how many unhappy moments, how many tears, you have cost me!

Enter FAULKLAND, L.

What means this? why this caution, Faulkland?

FAULK. Alas, Julia! I am come to take a long farewell!

JUL. Heav'ns! what do you mean?

FAULK. You see before you a wretch whose life is forfeited:—Nay, start not; the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me: I left you fretful and passionate—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly!—Oh, Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely, before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment!

JUL. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the nature of your misfortune: had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought, that I could now chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love. My heart has long known no other guardian: I now entrust my person to your honour—we will fly together: when safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled, and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows, and tenderest comforter.

FAULK. O Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude!—Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you, beside his solitary love?

JUL. I ask not a moment—No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself: and if I now, more than ever, prize the

solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love. But let us not linger—perhaps this delay—

FAULK. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark: yet am I grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition!

JUL. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act? I know not whether 'tis so, but sure that alone can never make us unhappy—The little I have will be sufficient to support us, and exile never should be splendid.

FAULK. Ay, but in such an abject state of life my wounded pride, perhaps, may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude, morose companion, beyond your patience to endure.

JUL. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you; one who, by bearing your infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

FAULK. Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device, I throw away all my doubts. Hows hall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

JUL. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

FAULK. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended. Let me to-morrow, in the face of heaven, receive my future guide and monitress, and expiate my past folly, by years of tender adoration.

JUL. Hold, Faulkland! that you are free from a crime, which I before feared to name, heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice! These are tears of thankfulness for that! But, that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express!

FAULK. By heavens! Julia—

JUL. Yet hear me—My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me! in

his presence I pledged my hand—joyfully pledged it where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me, that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whither to transfer, without a pause, my gratified duty as well as my affection: hence I have been content to bear from you, what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity.

FAULK. I confess it all! yet, hear—

JUL. After such a year of trial, I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel as unnecessary! I now see that it is not in your nature to be content, or confident in love. With this conviction I never will be yours.

FAULK. Nay, but Julia, by my soul and honour!—If, after this—

JUL. But one word more. As my faith has once been given to you, I will never barter it with another. I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity; and the dearest blessing I can ask of heaven to send you, will be to charm you from that unhappy temper which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement. All I request of you is, that you will yourself reflect upon this infirmity; and, when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your least regret, that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world. [Exit. R.]

FAULK. She's gone!—for ever!—There was an awful resolution in her manner that rivetted me to my place. O, fool!—dolt!—barbarian! Cursed as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow wretches, kind fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side! I must now hasten to my appointment. Well, my mind is turned for such a scene! I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here. O love! tormentor! fiend! whose influence, like the moon's, ac-

ting on men of dull souls , makes idiots of them , but meetingsubtler spirits , betrays their course , and urges sensibility to madness! [*Exit, L.*

Enter MAID and LYDIA , L.

MAID. My mistress , ma'am , I know , was here , just now ; perhaps she is only in the next room. [*Exit. R.*

LYD. Heigho ! Though he has used me so , this fellow runsstrangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him.

Enter JULIA , R.

Oh , Julia , I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation ! Lud , child ! what's the matter with you ! You have been crying !—I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you !

JUL. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness : something has flurried me a little. Nothing that you can guess at.

LYD. Ah ! whatever vexations you may have , I can assure you mine surpass them. You know who Beverley proves to be !

JUL. I will now own to you , Lydia , that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair.

LYD. So , then , I see I have been deceived by every one ! but I don't care , I'll never have him.

JUL. Nay , Lydia—

LYD. Why , is it not provoking , when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable , to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last ?—There had I projected one of the most sentimental elopements ! so becoming a disguise ! so amiable a ladder of ropes ! conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson—withsuch surprise to Mrs. Malaprop ! and such paragraphs in the newspapers !—Oh , I shall die with disappointment !

JUL. I don't wonder at it.

LYD. Now—sad reverse !—what have I to expect , but after a deal of flimsy preparation , with a bishop's licence , and my aunt's blessing , to go simpering up to the

altar! or, perhaps, be cried three times in a country church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish, to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, spinster.—Oh, that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

JUL. Melancholy, indeed!

LYD. How mortifying, to remember the dear, delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow! How often have I stole forth in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden, stuck like a dripping statue!—There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough, so pathetically!—he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension!—and, while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love!

JUL. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I could chide you only by laughing heartily at you; but it suits more the situation of my mind at present earnestly to entreat you, not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your caprice, which I know too well caprice can inflict. [MRS. MALAPROP *speaks within*, L.

LYD. Oh, lud! what has brought my aunt here?

Enter MRS. MALAPROP and DAVID, L.

MRS. M. So! so! here's fine work! here's fine suicide, paracide, and simulation, going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

JUL. For heaven's sake, madam, what's the matter?

MRS. M. That gentleman can tell you, 'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

LYD. Oh, patience!—Do, ma'am, for heaven's sake, tell us what is the matter!

MRS. M. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter! But he can tell you the perpendiculars.

[*Pointing to DAVID.*

JUL. Do speak, my friend.

[*To DAVID.*

DAV. Lookye, my lady—by the mass, there's mischief

going on. Folks don't use to meet for amusement with fire-arms, fire-locks, fire-engines, fire-screens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers beside!—This, my lady, I say has an angry favour.

JUL. But who's engaged?

DAV. My poor master—under favour for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master of course is, or was, Squire Acres—and Captain Absolute. Then comes Squire Faulkland.

JUL. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavour to prevent mischief.

Mrs. M. Oh, fie! it would be very inelegant in us—we should only participate things.

LYD. Do, my dear aunt, let us hasten to prevent them.

DAV. Ah, do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives!—they are desperately given, believe me. Above all, there is that blood-thirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger!—Oh, mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape! [*Aside.*]—Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire putrefactions!

LYD. What are we to do, madam?

Mrs. M. Why, fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief!—Come, girls, this gentleman will exhort us. Come, sir, you're our envoy, lead the way and we'll precede. You're sure you know the spot.

DAR. Oh, never fear! and one good thing is, we shall find it out by the report of the pistols.

ALL THE LADIES. The pistols! Oh, let us fly.

[*Exeunt, &c.*]

SCENE II.—*King's Mead Fields.*

Enter SIR LUCIUS *and* ACRES, *with Pistols*, R. U. E.

ACRES. By my valour, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims! I say it is a good distance.

SIR L. It is for muskets, or small field-pieces; upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave these things

to me. Stay now, I'll show you. [*Measures paces along the Stage.*] There, now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

ACRES. Z—ds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off the cooler I shall take my aim.

SIR L. Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

ACRES. No, Sir Lucius, but I should think forty, or eight-and-thirty yards—

SIR L. Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

ACRES. Odds bullets, no! by my valour, there is no merit in killing him so near! Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot: a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.

SIR L. Well, the gentleman's friend and I must settle that. But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

ACRES. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius, but I don't understapd—

SIR L. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk; and, if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it, I say, it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

ACRES. A quietus!

SIR L. For instance, now, if that should be the case, would you choose to be pickled and sent home? or would it be the same thing to you to lie here in the Abbey? I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

ACRES. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

SIR L. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

ACRES. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

SIR L. Ah, that's a pity; there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray, now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

ACRES. Odds flies ! I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius, there— [*Puts himself into an attitude*]—a side-front, hey? Odd, I'll make myself small enough; I'll stand edgeways.

SIR L. Now, you're quite out; for if you stand so when I take my aim— [*Levelling at him.*]

ACRES. Z—ds, Sir Lucius! are you sure it is not cocked?

SIR L. Never fear.

ACRES. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

SIR L. Pho! be easy. Well, now, if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance; for if it misses a vital part on your right side, 'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left.

ACRES. A vital part!

SIR L. But there—fix yourself so— [*Placing him*]—let him see the broadside of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do you any harm at all.

ACRES. Clean through me! a ball or two clean through me!

SIR L. Ay, may they; and it is much the genteelest attitude into the bargain.

ACRES. Lookye, Sir Lucius; I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one; so, by my valour! I will stand edgeways.

SIR L. [*Looking at his watch.*] Sure they don't mean to disappoint us—hah! no faith—I think I see them coming.

ACRES. Hey!—what!—coming!

SIR L. Ay, who are those yonder, getting over the stile?

ACRES. There are two of them indeed!—well, let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we—we—we—we—won't run!

SIR L. Run!

ACRES. No, I say—we won't run, by my valour!

SIR L. What the devil's the matter with you?

ACRES. Nothing, nothing, my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold somehow as I did.

SIR L. O fie! consider your honour.

ACRES. Ay, true—my honour—do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two, every now and then, about my honour.

SIR L. Well, here they're coming. [Looking.

ACRES. Sir Lucius, if I wasn't with you I should almost think I was afraid—if my valour should leave me! valour will come and go.

SIR L. Then pray keep it fast while you have it.

ACRES. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes, my valour is certainly going! it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out, as it were, at the palms of my hands!

SIR L. Your honour—your honour—Here they are.

ACRES. Oh, that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND and CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE, R. U. E.

SIR L. Gentlemen, your most obedient—hah!—what, Captain Absolute! So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend, then to proceed to business on your own account?

ACRES. What Jack?—my dear Jack—my dear friend!

CAPT. A. Harkye, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

SIR L. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your saluting the gentleman civilly. So, Mr. Beverley, [To FAULKLAND] if you choose your weapons, the Captain and I will measure the ground.

FAULK. My weapons, sir!

ACRES. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends!

SIR L. What, sir, did you not come here to fight Mr. Acres?

FAULK. Not I, upon my word, sir!

SIR L. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game—you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party, by sitting out.

CAPT. A. Oh pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

FAULK. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter.

ACRES. No, no, Mr. Faulkland; I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian. Lookee, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

SIR L. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled

with. You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now, if that gentleman is willing to represent him, I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

ACRES. Why, no, Sir Lucius, I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face! If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!

CAPT. A. Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case. The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

SIR L. Well, this is lucky. Now you have an opportunity—

ACRES. What, quarrel with my dear friend Jack Absolute!—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Z—ds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me no unnatural!

SIR L. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valour has oozed away with a vengeance!

ACRES. Not in the least! odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss Hall, or any thing of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

SIR L. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

ACRES. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward; coward was the word, by my valour!

SIR L. Well, sir?

ACRES. Lookye, Sir Lucius, 't isn't that I mind the word coward—Coward may be said in a joke—But if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls—

SIR L. Well, sir?

ACRES. I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

SIR L. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

CAPT. A. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres. He is a most determined dog—called in the country, fighting Bob. He generally kills a man a week—don't you, Bob?

SIR L. Well, then, captain, 'tis we must begin—so come out, my little counsellor [*Draws his sword*] and ask the gentleman, whether he will resign the lady without forcing you to proceed against him?

CAPT. A. Come on then, sir, [*Draws*] since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

Enter SIR ANTHONY, DAVID, and the LADIES, L. U. E.

DAV. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular—and bind his hands over to their good behaviour.

SIR ANTH. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy—how came you in a duel, sir?

CAPT. A. 'Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his majesty.

SIR ANTH. Here's a pretty fellow! I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his majesty! Z—ds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the king's sword against one of his subjects?

CAPT. A. Sir, I tell you, that gentleman called me out, without explaining his reasons.

SIR ANTH. 'Gad sir! how came you to call my son out, without explaining his reasons.

SIR L. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which any honour could not brook.

SIR ANTH. Z—ds, Jack! how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

MRS. M. Come, come, let's have no honour before ladies—Captain Absolute, come here—How could you intimidate us so? Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

CAPT. A. For fear I should be killed, or escape, ma'am?

MRS. M. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinced: speak, child.

SIR L. With your leave ma'am, I must put in a word here. I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence New mark—

LYD. What is it you mean, sir?

SIR L. Come, come, Dalia, we must be serious now; this is no time for trifling.

LYD. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

CAPT. A. Oh, my little angel, say you so? Sir Lucius, I perceive there must be some mistake here. With regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you, I can only say that it could not have been intentional. And as you must be convinced, that I should not fear to support a real injury, you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency—I ask your pardon. But for this lady, while honoured with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

SIR ANT. Well said, Jack, and I'll stand by you, my boy.

ACRES. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to any thing in the world; and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a bachelor.

SIR L. Captain, give me your hand—an affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation; and as for the lady, if she chooses to deny her own hand-writing, here—
[Takes out Letters.]

MRS. M. Oh, he will dissolve my mystery! Sir Lucius, perhaps there is some mistake. Perhaps I can illuminate—

SIR L. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere where you have no business. Miss Languish, are you my Dalia, or not?

LYD. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not!

[LYDIA and ABSOLUTE walk aside.]

MRS. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the soft impeachment—pardon my camelion blushes, I am Dalia.

SIR L. You Dalia!—pho! pho! be easy.

MRS. M. Why, thou barbarous Vandike—those letters are mine. When you are more sensible of my benignity; perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

SIR L. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension : and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you. And to show you I am not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Dalia into the bargain.

CAPT. A. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's my friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

SIR L. Hah! little valour—here, will you make your fortune?

ACRES. Odds wrinkles! No.—But give me your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive: but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

SIR ANTH. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—your are in your bloom yet.

MRS. M. O, Sir Anthony! men are all barbarians?

[*All retire but JULIA and FAULKLAND.*

JUL. He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen:—there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me—O women! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

FAULK. Julia!—how can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet hope is the child of penitence.

JUL. O! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours.

[*SIR ANTHONY come forward between them.*

FAULK. Now I shall be blest indeed.

SIR ANTH. What's going on here?—So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant.—Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland, seemed to proceed from what he calls the delicacy and warmth of his affection for you.—There, marry him directly, Julia, you'll find he'll mend surprisingly.

[*The rest of the characters come forward.*]

SIR. L. Come now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better.

ACRES. You are right, Sir Lucius—So, Jack, I wish you joy—Mr. Faulkland the same.—Ladies,—come now, to show you I'm neither vext nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I insist on your all meeting me there.

SIR. A. 'Gad! sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a good husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

FAULK. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine for having by her gentleness and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

CAPT. A. True, Faulkland, we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets of love—with this difference only, that you always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I—

LYD. Was always obliged to me for it, hey, Mr. Modesty?—But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

JUL. Then let us study to preserve it so; and while hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future bliss, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright to be lasting.—When hearts deserving happiness would unite their fortunes, virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them when its leaves are dropt!

THE END.

PIZARRO.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Ataliba.
Orozembo.
Rolla.
Hualpa.
Huasca.
Topac.
Pizarro.
Alonzo.
Las Casas.

Valverde.
Sentinel.
Gomez.
Orano.
Almagro.
Davillo.
High Priest.
Cora.
Elvira.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Tended Field in the background—the foreground, a Pavilion near Pizarro's Tent.*

ELVIRA discovered reclining on a couch, R. C.—VALVERDE enters, L, and attempts to kiss her hand; ELVIRA rises.

ELV. (R.) Audacious! Whence is thy privilege to interrupt the few moments of repose my harrassed mind can snatch amid the tumults of this noisy camp? Shall I inform thy master, Pizarro, of this presumptuous treachery?

VAL. (R. C.) I am his servant, it is true—trusted by him—and I know him well; and therefore 'tis I ask, by what magic could Pizarro gain thy heart, by what fatality still holds he thy affection?

ELV. (R. C.) Hold! thou trusty secretary!

VAL. (C.) Ignobly born! in mind and manners rude, ferocious, and unpolished, though cool and crafty if occasion need—in youth audacious—ill his first manhood—a licensed pirate—treating men as brutes, the world as booty; yet now the Spanish hero he is styled—the first of Spanish conquerors! and for a warrior so accomplis-

hed, 'tis fit Elvira should leave her noble family, her fame, her home, to share the dangers, humours, and the crimes of such a lover as Pizarro!

ELV. (L. C.) What! Valverde moralizing! But grant I am in error, what is thy incentive? Passion, infatuation, call it what thou wilt; but what attaches thee to this despised, unworthy leader? Base lucre is thy object, mean fraud thy means. Could you gain me, thou only hop'st to win a higher interest in Pizarro—I know you.

VAL. (R. C.) On my soul, thou wrong'st me; what else my faults, I have none towards thee: but indulge the scorn and levity of thy nature; do it while yet the time permits; the gloomy hour, I fear, too soon approaches.

ELV. Valverde a prophet, too!

VAL. Hear me, Elvira—Shame from his late defeat, and burning wishes for revenge, again have brought Pizarro to Peru; but trust me, he overrates his strength, nor measures well the foe. Encamped in a strange country, where terror cannot force, nor corruption buy, a single friend, what have we to hope? The army murmuring at increasing hardships, while Pizarro decorates with gaudy spoil the gay pavilion of his luxury, each day diminishes our force.

ELV. But are you not the heirs of those that fall?

VAL. Are gain and plunder, then, our only purpose? Is this Elvira's heroism?

ELV. No, so save me Heaven! I abhor the motive, means, and end of your pursuits; but I will trust none of you:—in your whole army there is not one of you that has a heart, or speaks ingenuously—aged Las-Casas, and he alone, excepted.

VAL. He! an enthusiast in the opposite and worse extreme!

ELV. Oh! had I earlier known that virtuous man, how different might my lot have been?

VAL. I will grant Pizarro could not then so easily have duped you; forgive me, but at that event I still must wonder.

ELV. (R.) Hear me, Valverde. When first my virgin

fancy waked to love, Pizarro was my country's idol. 'Tis known that when he left Panama in a slight vessel, his force was not an hundred men. Arrived at the Island of Gallo, with his sword he drew a line upon the sand, and said, "Pass those who fear to die or conquer with their leader." Thirteen alone remained, and at the head of these the warrior stood his ground. Even at the moment when my ears first caught this tale, my heart exclaimed, "Pizarro is its lord!" What since I have perceived, or thought, or felt! you must have more worth to win the knowledge of.

VAL. (L. c.) I press no further; still assured, that while Alonzo de Molina, our general's former friend and pupil, leads the enemy, Pizarro never more will be a conqueror.

[*Trumpets without, L.*]

ELV. Silence! I hear him coming; look not perplexed. —How mystery and fraud confound the countenance? Quick, put on an honest face, if thou canst.

Piz. [*Speaking without.*] Chain and secure him: I will examine him myself.

Enter PIZARRO, L. U. E.

Piz. [*Advancing down the c.*] Why dost thou smile Elvira?

ELV. (R.) To laugh or weep without a reason, is one of the few privileges poor women have.

Piz. (c.) Elvira, I will know the cause, I am resolved.

ELV. I am glad of that, because I love resolution, and I am resolved not to tell thee. Now my resolution, I take it, is better of the two, because it depends upon myself, and thine does not.

Piz. Psha! triller!

VAL. (L. c.) Elvira was laughing at my apprehensions that—

Piz. Apprehensions!

VAL. Yes——that Alonzo's skill and genius should so have disciplined and informed the enemy, as to——

Piz. Alonzo! the traitor! How I once loved that man!

His noble mother intrusted him, a boy, to my protection. [*Elvira walks about pensively in the background.*] At my table did he feast—in my tent did he repose. I had marked his early genius, and the valorous spirit that grew with it. Often had I talked to him of our first adventures—what storms we struggled with—what perils we surmounted! When landed with a slender host upon an unknown land—then, when I told how famine and fatigue, discord and toil, day by day, did thin our ranks; amid close-pressing enemies, how, still undaunted, I endured and dared—maintained my purpose and my power, in despite of growling mutiny or bold revolt, till, with my faithful few remaining, I became at last victorious!—When, I say, of these things I spoke, the youth Alonzo, with tears of wonder and delight, would throw him on my neck, and swear his soul's ambition owned no other leader.

VAL. What could subdue attachment so begun?

PIZ. Las-Casas.—He it was, with fascinating craft and canting precepts of humanity, raised in Alonzo's mind a new enthusiasm, which forced him, as the stripling termed it, to forego his country's claims for those of human nature.

VAL. Yes, the traitor left thee, joined the Peruvians, and became thy enemy, and Spain's.

PIZ. But first with weariless remonstrance he sued to win me from my purpose, and untwine the sword from my determined grasp. Much he spoke of right, of justice, and humanity, calling the Peruvians our innocent and unoffending brethren.

VAL. They!—Obdurate heathens!—They our brethren!

PIZ. But when he found, that the soft folly of the pleading tears he dropped upon my bosom, fell on marble, he flew and joined the foe: then, profiting by the lessons he had gained in wronged Pizarro's school, the youth so disciplined and led his new allies, that soon he forced me—Ha! I burn with shame and fury while I own it!—in base retreat and foul discomfiture to quit the shore.

VAL. But the hour of revenge is come.

Piz. It is ; I have returned—my fore is strengthened , and the audacious boy shall soon know that Pizarro lives , and has—a grateful recollection of the thanks he owes him. [Goes to the L.]

VAL. (c.) 'Tis doubted whether still Alonzo lives.

Piz. (L. c.) 'Tis certain that he does ; one of his armour-bearers is just made prisoner : twelve thousand is their force , as he reports , led by Alonzo and Peruvian Rolla. This day they make a solemn sacrifice on their ungodly altars. We must profit by their security ; and attack them unprepared—the sacrificers shall become the victims.

ELV. [*Advancing, R.*] Wretched innocents ! and their own blood shall bedew their altars !

Piz. (c.) Right ! [*Trumpets without, L.*] (R. c.) Elvira , retire !

ELV. (R.) Why should I retire ?

Piz. Because men are to meet here , and on manly business.

ELV. O men ! men ! ungrateful and perverse ! O woman ! still affectionate though wronged ! [*Val. retires back on R.*] The beings to whose eyes you turn for animation , hope , and rapture , through the days of mirth and revelry , and on whose bosoms , in the hour of sore calamity , you seek for rest and consolation , *them*, when the pompous follies of your mean ambition are the question , you treat as play-things or as slaves !—I shall not retire.

Piz. Remain , then—and , if thou canst , be silent.

ELV. They only babble who practise not reflection. I shall think—and thought is silence.

[*Goes to the couch, R. c. and sits, Val. stands at her back.*]

Piz. Ha !—there's somewhat in her manner lately—

Enter LAS CASAS , AINAGRO , GONZALO , DAVILLA , Officers , and Soldiers, L.

LAS-C. (R. c.) Pizarro , we attend thy summons.

Piz. (c.) Welcome , venerable father—my friends , most welcome. Friends and fellow-soldiers , at length the hour has arrived , which to Pizarro's hopes presents the

full reward of our undaunted enterprise, and longenduring toils. Confident in security, this day the foe devotes to solemn sacrifice: if with bold surprise we strike on their solemnity—trust to your leader's word—we shall not fail.

ALM. (L. c.) Too long inactive have we been mouldering on the coast—our stores exhausted, and our soldiers murmuring. Battle! battle!—then death to the arm'd, and chains for the defenceless.

DAY. Death to the whole Peruvian race!

LAS-C. Merciful Heaven!

ALM. Yes, General, the attack, and instantly! Then shall Alonzo, basking at his ease, soon cease to scoff our sufferings, and scorn our force.

LAS-C. Alonzo!—Scorn and presumption are not in his nature.

ALM. 'Tis fit Las-Casas should defend his pupil.

PIZ. Speak not of the traitor—or hear his name but as the bloody summons to assault and vengeance. It appears we are agreed?

ALM. DAY. We are.

GON. All!—Battle! Battle!

LAS-C. Is, then, the dreadful measure of your cruelty not yet complete?—Battle!—gracious Heaven! Against whom?—Against a king, in whose mild bosom your atrocious injuries even yet have not excited hate! but who, insulted or victorious, still sues for peace. Against a people, who never wronged the living being their Creator formed: a people who, children of innocence! received you as cherished guests—with eager hospitality and confiding kindness. Generously and freely did they share with you their comforts, their treasures, and their homes: you repaid them by fraud, oppression, and dishonour. These eyes have witnessed all I speak—as gods you were received; as fiends you have acted.

PIZ. Las-Casas!

LAS-C. Pizarro, hear me!—Hear me, chieftains!—And thou, All-powerful, whose thunders can shiver into sand the adamant rock—whose lightnings can pierce

to the core of the rivid and quaking earth—Oh! let thy power give effect to thy servant's words, as thy spirit gives courage to his will! Do not, I implore you, chieftains—countrymen—do not, I implore you, renew the foul barbarities which your insatiate avarice has inflicted on this wretched, unoffending race!—But hush, my sighs—fall not, drops of useless sorrow!—heartbreaking anguish, choke not my utterance. All I entreat is, send me once more tho those you *call* your enemies—Oh! let me be the messenger of penitence from you, I shall return with blessings and with peace from them [*Turning to Elv.*] Elvira, you weep!—Alas! and does this dreadful crisis move no heart but thine!

ALM. Because there are no women here but she and thou.

PIZ. Close this idle war of words: time flies, and our opportunity will be lost. Chieftains, are ye for instant battle?

ALM. We are.

LAS. C. Oh, men of blood! [*Kneels, R.*] God! thou hast anointed me thy servant—not to curse, but to bless my countrymen: yet now my blessing on their force were blasphemy against thy goodness. [*Rises.*] No! I curse your purpose, homicides! I curse the bond of blood by which you are united. May felt disunion, infamy, and rout, defeat your projects, and betray your hopes! On you and your children be the peril of the innocent blood which shall be shed this day! I leave you, and for ever! No longer shall these aged eyes be seared by the horrors they have witnessed. In caves, in forests, will I hide myself; with tigers and with savage beasts commune: and when at length we meet before the blessed tribunal of that Deity, whose mild doctrines and whose mercies ye have this day renounced, O then shall *you* feel the agony and grief of soul which tear the bosom of your accuser now!

[*Going.*

ELV. [*Rises, and takes the hand of Las-C.*] Oh! take me with thee.

LAS-C. Stay! lost, abused lady! I alone am useless he-

re. Perhaps thy loveliness may persuade to pity, where reason and religion plead in vain. Oh! save thy innocent fellow-creatures if thou canst: then shall thy frailty be redeemed, and thou wilt share the mercy thou bestowest.

[*Exit, R.*

PIZ. (R. C.) How, Elvira! wouldst thou leave me?

ELV. I am bewildered—grown terrified! Your inhumanity—and that good old man—oh! he appeared to me just now something more than heavenly!—and you!—ye all looked worse than earthly.

PIZ. Compassion sometimes becomes a beauty.

ELV. Humanity always becomes a conqueror.

PIZ. [*Turning to Alm.*] Now to prepare our muster and our march. At mid-day is the hour of the sacrifice. [*El. sits.*] Consulting with our guides, the route of your divisions shall be given each commander. If we surprise, we conquer; and if we conquer, the gates of Quito will be open to us.

ALM. And Pizarro then be monarch of Peru.

PIZ. Not so fast—ambition for a time must take counsel from discretion. Ataliba still must hold the shadow of a sceptre in his hand—Pizarro still appear dependent upon Spain; while the pledge of future peace, his daughter's hand [*Elv. rises, much agitated.*] secures the proud succession to the crown I seek.

ALM. This is best. In Pizarro's plans observe the statesman's wisdom guides the warrior's valour.

VAL. [*To Elv.*] You mark, Elvira?

ELV. (R.) O yes—this is best—this is excellent.

PIZ. You seem offended. Elvira still retains my heart. Think—a sceptre waves me on.

ELV. Offended? No! Thou knowest thy glory is my idol; and this will be most glorious, most just and honourable.

PIZ. What mean you?

ELV. Oh! nothing—mere woman's prattle—a jealous whim, perhaps; but let it not impede the royal hero's course. [*Trumpets without, L.*] The call of arms invites

you. Away! away! you, his brave, his worthy fellowwarriors.

PIZ. And go you not with me?

ELV. Undoubtedly! I needs must be the first to hail the future monarch of Peru.

Enter GOMEZ, L.

ALM. How, Gomez! what bring'st thou?

GOM. On yonder hill, among the palm-trees, we have surprised an old cacique; escape by flight he could not, and we seized him and his attendant unresisting: yet his lips breathed nothing but bitterness and scorn.

PIZ. Drag him before us. [*Elv. sits pensively.—Gomez leaves the tent, and returns conducting Orozembo and attendant in chains, L.*]

What art thou, stranger?

ORO. (L. c.) First tell me which among you is the captain of this band of robbers?

PIZ. (c.) Ha!

ALM. Madinan! Tear out his tongue, or else——

ORO. Thou'lt hear some truth.

DAV. (L. c. *showing his poniard.*) Shall I not plunge this into his heart?

ORO. [*After surveying Dav. contemptuously—then turning to Piz.*] Does your army boast many such heroes as this?

PIZ. Audacious!—This insolence has sealed thy doom. Die thou shalt, gray-headed ruffian. But first confess what thou knowest.

ORO. I know that which thou hast just assured me of—that I shall die.

PIZ. Less audacity, perhaps, might have preserved thy life.

ORO. My life is as a withered tree—it is not worth preserving.

PIZ. Hear me, old man. Even now we march against the Peruvian army. We know there is a secret path that leads to your strong-hold among the rocks: guide us to that, and name your reward. If wealth be thy wish——

ORO. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

PIZ. Dost thou despise my offer?

ORO. Thee and thy offer!—Wealth! I have the wealth of two dear gallant sons—I have stored in heaven the riches which repay good actions here—and still my chief treasure I do bear about me.

PIZ. What is that? Inform me.

ORO. I will; for it never can be thine—the treasure of a pure unsullied conscience. [*Elv. still sits, paying marked attention to Orozembo.*]

PIZ. I believe there is no other Peruvian who dares speak as thou dost.

ORO. Would I could believe there is no other Spaniard who dares act as thou dost.

GON. Obdurate Pagan! How numerous is your army?

ORO. Count the leaves of yonder forest.

ALM. Which is the weakest part of your camp?

ORO. It has no weak part—on every side 'tis fortified by justice.

PIZ. Where have you concealed your wives and your children?

ORO. In the hearts of their husbands and their fathers.

PIZ. Know'st thou Alonzo?

ORO. Know him! Alonzo! Know him! Our nation's benefactor! The guardian angel of Peru!

PIZ. By what has he merited that title?

ORO. By not resembling thee.

ALM. Who is this Rolla, joined with Alonzo in command?

ORO. I will answer that; for I love to hear and to repeat the hero's name. Rolla, the kinsman of the king, is the idol of our army; in war a tiger, chased by the hunter's spear; in peace more gentle than the unweaned lamb. Cora was once betrothed to him; but finding she preferred Alonzo, he resigned his claim, and, I fear, his peace, to friendship and to Cora's happiness; yet still he loves her with a pure and holy fire.

PIZ. Romantic savage! I shall meet this Rolla soon:

[*Retires to confer with Val.*]

ORO. Thou hadst better not ! The terrors of his noble eye would strike thee dead.

DAV. Silence , or tremble !

ORO. Beardless robber ! I never yet have trembled before God—why should I tremble before man ? Why before thee , thou less than man !

DAV. Another word , audacious heathen , and I strike !

ORO. Strike , Christian ! Then boast among thy fellows—I too have murdered a Peruvian !

DAV. Hell and vengeance seize thee ! [*Stabs him.*

PIZ. [*Rushing forward , c.*] Hold !

DAV. Couldst thou longer have endured his insults ?

PIZ. And therefore should he die untortur'd ?

ORO. True ! Observe , young man , [*To Dav.*] thy unthinking rashness has saved me from the rack ; and thou thyself hast lost the opportunity of a useful lesson : thou mightst thyself have seen with what cruelty vengeance would have inflicted torments—and with what patience virtue would have borne them.

ELV. [*Rising , runs to Oroz. and supports his head on her bosom , l. c.*] Oh ! ye are monsters all. Look up , thou martyr'd innocent ! look up once more , and bless me ere thou diest. God ! how I pity thee !

ORO. Pity me ! Me ! So near my happiness ! Bless thee , lady ! Spaniards—Heaven turn your hearts , and pardon you as I do.

[*Oroz. is borne off, dying , l.*

PIZ. Away. !—Davilla ! if thus rash a second time—

DAV. Forgive the hasty indignation which—

PIZ. No more—unbind that trembling wretch—let him depart ; 'tis well he should report the mercy which we show to insolent defiance. Hark ! our troops are moving.

ALM. [*L. on passing Elvira.*] If through thy gentle means my master's poor remains might be preserved from insult—

ELV. I understand thee.

ALM. His sons may yet thank thy charity , if not avenge their father's fate.

[*Exit , l.*

PIZ. What says the slave ?

ELV. A parting word to thank you for your mercy.

PIZ. Our guard and guides approach. [*Soldiers cross from R. to L.*] Follow me, friends—each shall have his post assigned, and here Peruvia's God shall sink beneath the main; the Spanish banner, bathed in blood, shall float above the walls of vanquish'd Quito.

[*Exeunt all but Elvira and Valverde, L.*]

VAL. (L.) Is it now presumption that my hopes gain strength with the increasing horrors which I see appal Elvira's soul?

ELV. (R.) I am mad with terror and remorse! Would I could fly these dreadful scenes!

VAL. Might not Valverde's true attachment thy refuge?

ELV. What wouldst thou do to save or to avenge me?

VAL. I dare do all thy injuries may demand—a word—and he lies bleeding at your feet.

ELV. Perhaps we will speak again of this. Now leave me.

[*Exit Valverde, L.*]

ELV. (R. c. alone) No! not this revenge—no! not this instrument. Fie, Elvira! even for a moment to counsel with this unworthy traitor! Can a wretch, false to a confiding master, be true to any pledge of love or honour? Pizarro will abandon me—yes; me—who, for his sake; have sacrificed—Oh, God!—what have I not sacrificed for him; yet, curbing the avenging pride that swells this bosom, I still will further try him. Oh, men! ye who, wearied by the fond fidelity of virtuous love, seek in the wanton's flattery a new delight, oh, ye may insult and leave the hearts to which your faith was pledged, and, stifling self-reproach, may fear no other peril; because such hearts, howe'er you injure and desert them, have yet the proud retreat of an unspotted fame—of unreproaching conscience. But beware the desperate libertine, who forsakes the creature whom his arts have first deprived of all natural protection—of all self consolation!—What has he left her?—Despair and vengeance. [*Exit, R.*]

ACT. II.

SCENE I.—*A rock, with a forest in the background. A bank, R.—CORA playing with her child, and ALONZO hanging over them with delight.*

CORA. (R.) Now confess, does he resemble thee, or not?

AL. (R.) Indeed he is liker thee—thy rosy softness, thy smiling gentleness.

CORA. But his auburn hair, the colour of his eyes, Alonzo. O! my lord's image, and my heart's adored!

[*Pressing the child to her bosom.*]

AL. The little daring urchin robs me, I doubt, of some portion of thy love, my Cora. At least he shares caresses, which till his birth were only mine.

CORA. O, no, Alonzo! A mother's love for her sweet babe is not a stealth from the dear father's store; it is a new delight that turns with quickened gratitude to him, the author of her augmented bliss.

AL. Could Cora think me serious?

CORA. I am sure he will speak soon: then will be the last of the three holydays allowed by Nature's sanction to the fond anxious mother's heart.

AL. (C.) What are those three?

CORA. (a. c.) The ecstasy of his birth I pass; that in part is selfish: but when first the white blossoms of his teeth appear, breaking the crimson buds that did incase them; that is a day of joy: next, when from his father's arms he runs without support, and clings, laughing and delighted, to his mother's knees; that is the mother's heart's next holyday: and sweeter still the third, when-e'er his little stammering tongue shall utter the grateful sound of Father, Mother!—O! that is the dearest joy of all!

AL. (C.) Beloved Cora!

CORA. (C.) Oh! my Alonzo! daily, hourly, do I pour thanks to heaven for the dear blessing I possess in him and thee.

AL. To heaven and Rolla.

CORA. Yes, to heaven and Rolla : and art thou not grateful to them , too, Alonzo ? Art thou not happy ?

AL. Can Cora ask that question ?

CORA. Why, then, of late , so restless on thy couch ? Why to my waking, watching ear, so often does the stillness of the night betray thy struggling sighs ?

AL. Must not I fight against my country, against my brethren ?

CORA. Do they not seek our destruction ? and are not all men brethren ?

AL. Should they prove victorious !

CORA. I will fly , and meet thee in the mountains .

AL. Fly with thy infant , Cora ?

CORA. What ! think you a mother , when she runs from danger , can feel the weight of her child ?

AL. Cora , my beloved , do you wish to set my heart at rest ?

CORA. Oh , yes ! yes ! yes !

AL. Hasten, then, to the concealment in the mountains ; where all our matrons and virgins , and our warrior's offspring, are allotted to await the issue of the war.—Cora will not alone resist her husband's , her sister's , and her monarch's wish.

CORA. Alonzo , I cannot leave thee ; Oh ! how in every moment's absence would my fancy paint you , wounded, alone, abandoned ! No , no , I cannot leave thee !

AL. Rolla will be with me.

CORA. Yes , while the battle rages , and where it rages most , brave Rolla will be found. He may revenge , but cannot save thee. To follow danger , he will leave even thee. But I have sworn never to forsake thee but with life. Dear , dear Alonzo ! canst thou wish that I should break my vow ?

AL. Then be it so. Oh ! excellence in all that's great and lovely , in courage , gentleness , and truth ! my pride, my content, my all ! Can there on this earth be fools who seek for happiness , and pass by love in the pursuit ?

CORA. Alonzo, I cannot thank thee—silence is the gratitude of true affection: who seeks to follow it by sound, will miss the track. [*Shouts without, L.*] Does the king approach?

AL. No, 'tis the general, placing the guard that will surround the temple, during the sacrifice. 'Tis Rolla comes, the first and best of heroes.

ROLLA, *within, L.*

Then place them on the hill fronting the Spanish camp.
[*Enters, E.*

CORA. Rolla! my friend, my brother!

AL. Rolla! my friend, my benefactor! how can our lives repay the obligations which we owe thee?

ROL. (L. c.) Pass them in peace and bliss. Let Rolla witness it, he his overpaid.

CORA. Look on this child—he is the life-blood of my heart; but if ever he love or revere thee less than his own father, his mother's hate fall on him!

ROL. (C.) Oh, no more! What sacrifice have I made to merit gratitude? The object of my love was Cora's happiness. I see her happy. Is not my object gained; and am I not rewarded? Now, Cora, (R. c.) listen to a friend's advice. Thou must away; thou must seek the sacred caverns, the unprofaned recess, whither, after this day's sacrifice, our matrons, and e'en the virgins of the sun, retire.

CORA. (R.) Not secure with Alonzo, and with thee?

[*Alonzo stands, L. c.*

ROL. (R.) We have heard Pizarro's plan is to surprise us. The presence, Cora, cannot aid, but, may impede our efforts.

CORA. Impede!

ROL. Yes, yes. Thou know'st how tenderly we love thee; we, thy husband and thy friend. Art thou near us?—Our thoughts, our valour—vengeance will not be our own. No advantage will be pursued, that leads us from the spot where thou art placed; no succour will be given but for thy protection. The faithful lover dares

not be all himself amid the war, until he knows that the beloved of his soul is absent from the peril of the fight.

AL. Thanks to my friend; 'tis this I would have urged.

CORA. This timid excess of love, producing fear instead of valour, flatters, but does not convince me: the wife is incredulous.

ROL. And is the mother unbelieving, too?

CORA. [*Kisses child.*] No more. Do with me as thou pleasest. My friend, my husband! place me where thou wilt.

AL. My adored! we thank you both. [*March without, R.*] Hark! the king approaches to the sacrifice. Thou, Rolla, spokest of rumours of surprise. A servant of mine, I hear, is missing; whether surprised or treacherous, I know not.

ROL. It matters not; we are every where prepared.—Come, Cora, upon the altar 'mid the rocks thou'lt implore a blessing on our cause. The pious supplication of the trembling wife, and mother's heart, rises to the throne of mercy, the most resistless prayer of human homage.

[*Exeunt, R.—Rolla leads off Cora.—Alonzo takes the child by the hand, and follows.*]

SCENE II.—*The Temple of the Sun.*—A solemn March—*The Warriors and King enter, L. U. E. and R. U. E., come down the c. and form R. and L. side of the Temple.*
—ROLLA, ALONZO, and CORA, on the R.

ATA. (c.) Welcome, Alonzo! [*To Rolla.*] Kinsman, thy hand. [*To Cora.*] Bless'd be the object of the happy mother's love.

CORA. (R. c.) May the son bless the father of his people?

ATA. In the welfare of his children lives the happiness of their king. Friends, what is the temper of our soldiers?

ROL. (c.) Such as becomes the cause which they support;

their cry is, victory or death! our king, our country, and our God!

ATA. (R.) Thou, Rolla, in the hour of peril, hast been wont to animate the spirit of their leaders, ere we proceed to consecrate the banners which thy valour knows so well to guard.

ROL. [*During this speech the King stands R.—Alonzo, Cora, and Child, L. C. near the Altar.*] Yet never was the hour of peril near, when to inspire them words were so little needed. My brave associates! partners of my toil, my feelings, and my fame! Can Rolla's words add vigour to the virtuous energies which inspire your hearts? No! you have judged as I have, the foulness of the crafty plea by which these bold invaders would delude you. Your generous spirit has compared, as mine has, the motives which, in a war like this, can animate *their* minds, and *ours*. *They*, by a strange frenzy driven, fight for power, for plunder, and extended rule. *We*, for our country, our altars, and our homes. *They* follow an adventurer whom they fear, and obey a power which they hate. *We* serve a monarch whom we love—a God whom we adore. Whene'er they move in anger, desolation tracks their progress!—Whene'er they pause in amity, affliction mourns their friendship. They boast, they come but to improve our state, enlarge our thoughts, and free us from the yoke of error! Yes—*they* will give enlightened freedom to *our* minds, who are themselves the slaves of passion, avarice, and pride. They offer us their protection—yes, such protection as vultures give to lambs—covering and devouring them! They call on us to barter all of good we have inherited and proved, for the desperate chance of something better which they promise. Be our own plain answer this :—The throne *we* honour is the *people's* choice—the laws we reverence are our brave fathers' legacy—the faith we follow teaches us to live in bonds of charity with all mankind, and die with hope of bliss beyond the grave. Tell your invaders this, and tell them, too, we seek no change; and, least of all, such change as they would bring us.

[*Goes R. to the King. Loud shouts of the Soldiery, R.*

ATA. [*Embracing Rolla.*] Now, holy friends, ever mindful of these sacred truths begin the sacrifice.

CHORUS.—*Enter PRIESTS and VIRGINS*, L. U. E. and R. U. E., *descend in the c., and form R. and L.* HIGH PRIEST *stands R. of the Altar. The Banner of the Sun placed behind the Altar.*

Oh Pow'r supreme! in mercy smile
With favour on thy servants' toil!
Our hearts from guileful passions free,
Which here we render unto thee!
Thou Parent Light but deign to hear
The voices of our feeble choir;
And this, our sacrifice of fear,
Consume with thine own hallowed fire!

[*Fire from above alights upon the Altar.—Rolla and King advance to the Altar.*

Give praise, give praise, the God has heard,
Our God most awfully revered!
The altar his own flames enwreathed!
Then be the conquering sword unsheathed,
And victory set on Rolla's brow,
His foes to crush—to overthrow!

ATA. (c.) Our offering is accepted. [*Rise, and all close round, and prostrate at the Altar.—Exit Chorus, etc.*] Now to arms, my friends, prepare for battle!

[*Goes with Rolla, R.*

Enter ORANO, R.

ORA. (R.) The enemy!

ATA. (R.) How near!

ORA. From the hill's brow, e'en now as I o'erlooked their force, suddenly I perceived the whole in motion: with eager haste they march towards our deserted camp, as if apprised of this most solemn sacrifice.

ROL. (R. c.) They must be met before they reach it.

ATA. [*To Cora, etc. c.*] And you, my daughters, with your dear children, away to the appointed place of safety.

CORA. (L. C.) Oh, Alonzo! [Embracing him.

AL. (L. C.) We shall meet again.

CORA. Bless us once more, ere thou leave us.

AL. Heaven protect and bless thee, my beloved; and thee, my innocent!

ATA. (R.) Haste! haste!—each moment is precious!

CORA. Farewell, Alonzo! Remember thy life is mine.

ROL. [As she is passing him R. C.] Not one farewell to Rolla?

CORA. [Giving him her hand.] Farewell! the God of war be with thee: but bring me back Alonzo.

[Exit, with the child, R.

ATA. [C. drawing his sword.] Now, my brethren, my sons, my friends, I know your valour. Should ill success assail us, be despair the last feeling of your hearts. If successful, let mercy be the first. Alonzo, to thee I give to defend the narrow passage of the mountains. On the right of the wood be Rolla's station. For me, straight forwards will I march to meet them, and fight until I see my people saved, or they behold their monarch fall. Be the word of battle—God! and our native land!

[A march.—Exeunt, L. U. E. King first, Rolla and Alonzo follow hand-in-hand, Soldiers close up the rear, R. and L. U. E.

SCENE III.—A Wood.

Enter ROLLA and ALONZO, L.

ROL. (R. C.) Here, my friend, we separate—soon, I trust, to meet again in triumph.

AL. (L. C.) Or perhaps we part to meet no more. Rolla, a moment's pause; we are yet before our army's strength; one earnest word at parting.

ROL. There is in language now no word but battle.

AL. Yes, one word more—Cora!

ROL. Cora! speak!

AL. The next hour brings us—

ROL. Death or victory!

AL. It may be victory to one—death to the other.

ROL. Or both may fall.

AL. If so, my wife and child I bequeath to the protection of heaven and my king. But should I only fall, Rolla, be thou my heir.

ROL. How?

AL. Be Cora thy wife—be thou a father to my child.

ROL. Rouse thee, Alonzo! Banish these timid fancies.

AL. Rolla! I have tried in vain, and cannot fly from the foreboding which oppresses me: thou know'st it will not shake me in the fight: but give me the promise I exact.

ROL. If it be Cora's will—Yes—I promise.

[*Gives his hand.*]

AL. Tell her it was my last wish! and bear to her and to my son, my last blessing.

ROL. I will.—Now then to our posts, and let our swords speak for us.

[*They draw their swords.*]

AL. For the king and Cora!

ROL. For Cora and the king!

[*Exeunt, Rolla R., Alonzo L.*]

SCENE IV.—*A view of the Peruvian Camp.*

Enter an OLD BLIND MAN and a BOY, L.

O. MAN. (L.) Have none returned to the camp?

Boy. (L.) One messenger alone. From the temple they all march' to meet the foe.

O. MAN. Hark, I hear the din of battle. O! had I still retain'd my sight, I might now have grasp'd a sword, and died a soldier's death! Are we quite alone?

Boy. Yes!—I hope my father will be safe!

O. MAN. He will do his duty. I am more anxious for thee, my child.

Boy. I can stay with thee, dear grandfather.

O. MAN. But should the enemy come, they will drag thee from me, my boy.

Boy. Impossible, grandfather! for they will see at once that thou art old and blind, and cannot do without me.

O. MAN. Poor child! thou little know'st the hearts of

these inhuman men. [*Trumpets, , alarms, and discharges of cannon heard, R.*] Hark! the noise is near—I hear the dreadful roaring of the fiery engines of these cruel strangers. [*Shouts at a distance, R.*] At every shout, with involuntary haste, I clench my hand, and fancy still it grasps a sword! Alas! I can only serve my country by my prayers. Heaven preserve the Inca, and his gallant soldiers!

Boy. O father! there are soldiers running—

O. MAN. Spaniards, boy?

Boy. No, Peruvians!

O. MAN. How! and flying from the field!—It cannot be.

Enter Two Peruvian SOLDIERS, R.

O speak to them, boy!—Whence come you? How goes the battle?

SOL. We may not stop; we are sent for the reserve behind the hill. The day's against us.

[*Exeunt Soldiers.*

O. MAN. Quick, then, quick!

Boy. I see the points of lances glittering in the light.

O. MAN. Those are Peruvians. Do they bend this way?

Enter a Peruvian SOLDIER, R.

Boy. Soldier, speak to my blind father.

SOL. I'm sent to tell the helpless father to retreat among the rocks: all will be lost, I fear.—The king is wounded.

O. MAN. Quick, boy! Lead me to the hill where thou mayst view the plain.

[*Alarms.—Old Man and Boy retire, L.*

Enter ATALIBA, wounded, with ORANO, Officers, and Soldiers, R. U. E.

ATA. (C.) My wound is bound; believe me, the hurt is nothing; I may return to the fight.

ORA. Pardon your servant, but the allotted priest who attends the sacred banner has pronounced, that the Inca's blood once shed, no blessing can await the day, until he leave the field.

ATA. Hard restraint! O! my poor brave soldiers!—Hard that I may no longer be a witness of their valour. But haste you; return to your comrades: I will not keep one soldier from his post. Go, and avenge your fallen brethren. [*Exeunt Orano, etc.*] I will not repine: my own fate is the last anxiety of my heart. It is for you, my people, that I feel and fear.

[*Old Man and Boy advance.*

O. MAN. (L. c.) Did I not hear the voice of an unfortunate! Who is it complains thus?

ATA. One almost by hope forsaken.

O. MAN. Is the king alive?

ATA. The king still lives.

O. MAN. Then thou art not forsaken! Ataliba protects the meanest of his subjects.

ATA. And who shall protect Ataliba?

O. MAN. The Immortal Powers, that protect the just. The virtues of our monarch alike secure to him the affection of his people, and the benign regard of heaven.

ATA. How impious had I murmur'd! How wondrous, thou Supreme Disposer, are thy acts! Even in this moment, which I had thought the bitterest trial of mortal suffering, thou hast infused the sweetest sensation of my life—it is the assurance of my people's love.

Boy. [*Turning forward.*] O father!—Stranger!—see those hideous men that rush us yonder!

ATA. Ha! Spaniards! And I, Ataliba—ill-fated fugitive! without a sword even to try the ransom of a monarch's life.

Enter DAVILLA, ALMAGRO, and Spanish Soldiers, L.

DAY. 'Tis he—our hopes are answered—I know him well—it is the king.

ALM. Away; follow with your prize. Avoid those Peruvians, though in flight. This way we may regain our line.

[*Exeunt Davilla, Almagro, etc. with Ataliba, prisoner.*

O. MAN. The king! Wretched old man, that could not see his gracious form!—Boy, would thou hadst led me to the reach of those ruffians' swords!

Boy. Father! all our countrymen are flying here for refuge.

O. MAN. No—to the rescue of their king—they never will desert him. *[Alarms without, R.]*

Enter Peruvian Officers and Soldiers, Orano following, R. S. E., and form on L.

ORA. (R.) Hold, I charge you! Rolla calls you.

OFFIC. We cannot combat with their dreadful engines.

Enter ROLLA, R. S. E.

ROL. (C.) Hold, recreants! cowards!—What, fear ye death, and fear not shame? By my soul's fury, I cleave to the earth the first of you that stirs, or plunge your dastard swords into your leader's heart, that he no more may witness your disgrace. Where is the king?

ORA. From this old man and boy I learn, that the detachment of the enemy, which you observed so suddenly to quit the field, have succeeded in surprising him; they are yet in sight.

ROL. And hear the Inca off a prisoner!—Hear this, ye base, disloyal rout! Look there!—the dust you see hangs on the bloody Spaniard's track, dragging, with ruffian taunts, your king, your father—Ataliba in bondage! Now fly and seek your own vile safety, if you can!

O. MAN. Bless the voice of Rolla!—and bless the stroke I once lamented, but which now spares these extinguished eyes the shame of seeing the pale, trembling wretches who dare not follow Rolla, though to save their king!

ROL. Shrink ye from the thunder of the foe, and fall ye not at this rebuke?—Oh! had ye each but one drop of the loyal blood which gushes to waste through the brave heart of this sightless veteran! Eternal shame pursue you if you desert me now!—But do—alone I go—alone—to die with glory by my monarch's side!

SOLDIERS. Rolla! we'll follow thee!

[Rolla rushes out R., followed by Orano, etc.]

O. MAN. (L. C.) O, godlike Rolla! And thou, sun, send from thy clouds avenging lightning to his aid!—Haste,

my boy, ascend some height, and tell to my impatient terror what thou seest!

Boy. I can climb this rock, and the tree above. [*Ascends a rock, L.*] O, now I see them—now—yes—and the Spaniards turning by the steep.

O. MAN. Rolla follows them?

Boy. He does—he does—he moves like an arrow!—now he waves his arm to our soldiers. [*Report of cannon, R.*] Now there is fire and smoke.

O. MAN. Yes, fire is the weapon of those fiends.

Boy. The wind blows off the smoke; they are all mixed together.

O. MAN. Seest thou the king.

Boy. Yes! Rolla is near him!—His sword sheds fire as he strikes!

O. MAN. Bless thee, Rolla! Spare not the monsters.

Boy. Father! father, the Spaniards fly!—O, now I see the king embracing Rolla.

[*Shouts of victory, flourish of trumpets, etc. R.*]

O. MAN. [*Falls on his knees, L. c.*] Fountain of life! how can my exhausted breath bear to thee thanks for this one moment of my life! My boy, come down and let me kiss thee!—My strength is gone—

[*Boy descends.*]

Boy. Let me help thee, father. Thou tremblest so—

O. MAN. 'Tis with transport, boy!

[*Boy leads him off, L.—Shouts, flourish, etc.*]

Enter ATALIBA, ROLLA, and Peruvians, R. U. E.

ATA. (c.) In the name of my people, the saviour of whose sovereign thou hast this day been, accept this emblem of his gratitude. [*Giving Rolla his sun of diamonds.*] The tear that falls upon it may for a moment dim its lustre, yet does it not impair the value of the gift.

ROL. (c.) It was the hand of heaven, not mine, that saved my king.

Enter Peruvian Officer, R.

ROL. Now, soldier, from Alonzo?

OFFIC. Alonzo's genius soon repaired the panic which

early broke our ranks; but I fear we have to mourn Alonzo's loss : his eager spirit urged him too far in the pursuit.

ATA. How ! Alonzo slain ! O ! victory, dearly purchased !

ROL. (R. C.) O Cora ! who shall tell thee this ?

ATA. Rolla, our friend is lost—our native country saved ! Our private sorrows must yield to the public claim for triumph. Now go we to fulfil the first, the most sacred duty which belongs to victory—to dry the widowed and the orphaned tear of those whose brave protectors have perished in their country's cause.

[*Triumphant march.—King takes the hand of Rolla, and exeunt, L. Soldiers following.*]

ACT. III.

SCENE I.—*A Wild Retreat.—Cora sitting with her Child in the background, and Wives and Children discovered scattered about.*

GLEE.—*Women,*

Fly away, Time, nor be the anxious hour delay'd—
Fly away, Time, that soothes the heart by grief dismay'd ;
Should ghastly death appear in view,

We can dare it ;

With friends we love, so brave, so true,

We will share it.

Fly away, Time, etc.

*A triumphant march of the army is heard at a distance,
—Cora rises and looks anxiously about.*

Wom. Hush ! hush ! don't you hear ?

A distant march assails the ear ;—

Hark ! louder still from yonder hill

Increasing sounds with terror fill—

Enter Warriors, singing, L. U. E.—CORA attentively examines them all as they pass.

Victory now has made us free;
We haste, we haste, our friends to see!

ATA. Thanks, thanks, my children! I am well, believe it; the blood once stopped, my wound was nothing.

Cora at length approaches Rolla, c. who appears to have been mournfully avoiding her.] Where is Alonzo?

[Rolla turns away in silence.]

CORA. *[Falling at the king's feet.]* Give me my husband, give this child his father!

ATA. (c.) I grieve that Alonzo is not here.

CORA. Hoped you to find him?

ATA. Most anxiously.

CORA. Ataliba! is he not dead?

ATA. No! the gods will have heard our prayers.

CORA. *[Starts up.]* Is he not dead, Ataliba?

ATA. He lives—in my heart.

CORA. Oh, king! torture me not thus!—Speak out, is this child fatherless?

ATA. (L. c.) Dearest Cora! do not thus dash aside the little hope that still remains.

CORA. The little hope! yet still there is hope! *[Turns to Rolla.]* Speak to me, Rolla; thou art the friend of truth.

ROL. (R. c.) Alonzo has not been found.

CORA. (c.) Not found! What mean'st thou? Will not thou, Rolla, tell me true? Oh! let me not hear the thunder rolling at a distance; let the bolt fall and crush my brain at once.—Say not that he is not found; say at once that he is dead.

ROL. Then should I say false.

CORA. False! blessings on thee for that word! But snatch me from this terrible suspense. *[Cora and Child kneel to Rolla.]* Lift up thy little hands, my child; perhaps thy ignorance may plead better than thy mother's agony.

ROL. Alonzo is taken prisoner.

CORA. Prisoner! and by the Spaniards? Pizarro's prisoner? Then is he dead.

ATA. Hope better—the richest ransom which our realm can yield, a herald shall this instant bear.

CORA. Now one boon more, beloved monarch. Let me go with the herald.

ATA. Remember, Cora; thou art not a wife only, but a mother too: hazard not thy own honour, and the safety of thy infant. Among these barbarians the sight of thy youth, thy loveliness, and innocence, would but rivet faster thy Alonzo's chains, and rack his heart with added fears for thee. Wait, Cora, the return of the herald.

CORA. Teach me how to live till then.

ATA. Now we go to offer to the gods thanks for our victory and prayers for Alonzo's safety.

[*March and procession.—Exeunt King and Army, L. U. E.*

—*Cora and Child, followed by Rolla, R. S. E.*

SCENE II. — *The Wood.*

Enter CORA and Child, R.

CORA. Mild innocence! what will become of thee?

Enter ROLLA, R.

ROL. (R.) Cora, I attend thy summons at the appointed spot.

CORA. (C.) Oh my child, my boy!—hast thou still a father?

ROL. Cora, can thy child be fatherless, while Rolla lives?

CORA. Will he not soon want a mother too! For canst thou think I will survive Alonzo's loss?

ROL. (R. C.) Yes! for his child's sake.—Yes, as thou didst love Alonzo, Cora, listen to Alonzo's friend.

CORA. Thou bidst me listen to the world.—Who was not Alonzo's friend?

ROL. (C.) His parting words——

CORA. His parting words! [*Wildly.*] Oh, speak!

ROL. Consign'd to me two precious trusts—his blessing to his son and a last request to thee.

CORA. His last request! his last!—Oh, name it!

ROL. If I fall, said he—and sad forebodings shook him while he spoke—promise to take Cora for thy wife; be thou a father to my child. I pledged my word to him, and we parted. Observe me, Cora, I repeat this only as my faith to do so was given to Alonzo—for myself, I neither cherish claim nor hope.

CORA. (L. c.) Ha! does my reason fail me, or what is this horrid light that presses on my brain? Oh, Alonzo! it may be thou hast fallen a victim to thy own guileless heart—hadst thou been silent, hadst thou not made a fatal legacy of these wretched charms——

ROL. Cora! what hateful suspicion has possessed thy mind?

CORA. Yes, yes, 'tis clear—his spirit was ensnared; he was led to the fatal spot, where mortal valour could not front a host of murderers.—He fell—in vain did he exclaim for help to Rolla. At a distance thou look'st on and smil'dst—Thou couldst have saved him—couldst, but didst not.

ROL. Oh, glorious sun! can I have deserved this? Cora rather bid me strike this sword into my heart—

CORA. No! live! live for love! for that love thou seekest: whose blossoms are to shoot from the bleeding grave of thy betrayed and slaughtered friend!—But thou hast borne to me the last words of my Alonzo! now hear mine—Sooner shall this boy draw poison from this tortured breast—sooner would I link me to the pallid corse of the meanest wretch that perish'd with Alonzo, than he call Rolla father—than I call Rolla husband!

ROL. Yet call me what I am—thy friend, thy protector!

CORA. [*Distractedly.*] Away! I have no protector but my God! [*Falls on her knees.—Rolla steps back to R.*] With this child in my arms will I hasten to the field of slaughter.—There with these hands will I turn up to the light every mangled body—seeking, however by death disfigured, the sweet smile of my Alonzo—with fearful cries I will

shriek out his name till my veins snap! If the smallest spark of life remain, he will know the voice of his Cora, open for a moment his unshrouded eyes, and bless me with a last look. [*Rises.*] But if we find him not—Oh! then, my boy, we will to the Spanish camp—that look of thine will win my passage through a thousand swords—they too are men. Is there a heart that could drive back the wife that seeks her bleeding husband; or the innocent bade that cries for his imprisoned father? No, no, my child, every where we shall be safe. A wretched mother, bearing a poor orphan in her arms, has Nature's passport through the world. Yes, yes, my son, we'll go and seek thy father. [*Passes Rolla, and exit with the Child, r.*]

ROL. (c.) [*After a pause of agitation.*] Could I have merited one breath of thy reproaches; Cora, I should be the wretch—I think I was not formed to be. Her safety must be my present purpose—then to convince her she has wronged me! [*Exit L.*]

SCENE III.—*Pizarro's Tent.*—PIZARRO traversing the stage in agitation.

PZ. Well, capricious idol, Fortune, be my ruin thy work and boast. To myself I will still be true.—Yet, ere I fall, grant me thy smile to prosper in one act of vengeance, and be that smile Alonzo's death.

Enter ELVIRA, R.

Who's there? Who dares intrude? (c.) Why does my guard neglect their duty?

ELV. (R.) Thy guard did what they could—but they knew their duty better than to enforce authority, when I refused obedience.

PZ. And what is it thou desirest?

ELV. (R. c.) To see how a hero bears misfortune. Thou, Pizarro, art not now collected—nor thyself.

PZ. Wouldst thou, I should rejoice that the spears of the enemy, led by accurs'd Alonzo, have pierced the bravest hearts of my followers?

ELV. No!—I would have thee cold and dark as the night

that follows the departed storm; still and sullen as the awful pause that precedes nature's convulsion: yet I would have thee feel assured, that a new morning shall arise, when the warrior's spirit shall stalk forth—nor fear the future, nor lament the past.

PIZ. Woman! Elvira!—why had not all my men hearts like thine?

ELV. Then would thy brows have this day worn the crown of Quito.

PIZ. Oh! hope fails me while that scourge of my life and fame, Alonzo, leads the enemy.

ELV. Pizarro, I am come to probe the hero farther: not now his courage, but his magnanimity—Alonzo is thy prisoner.

PIZ. How!

ELV. 'Tis certain: Valverde saw him even now dragged in chains within thy camp. I chose to bring thee this intelligence myself.

PIZ. Bless thee, Elvira, for the news!—Alonzo in my power!—Then I am the conqueror—the victory is mine!

ELV. Pizarro, this is savage and unmanly triumph. Believe me, thou raisest impatience in my mind to see the man whose valour and whose genius awe Pizarro; whose misfortunes are Pizarro's triumph; whose bondage is Pizarro's safety.

PIZ. (R). Guard!—Drag here the Spanish prisoner, Alonzo!—Quick, bring the traitor here?

ELV. What shall be his fate?

PIZ. (R. c.) Death! death! in lingering torments! protracted to the last stretch that burning vengeance can devise, and fainting life sustain.

ELV. (L. c.) Shame on thee! Wilt thou have it said, that the Peruvians found Pizarro could not conquer till Alonzo felt that he could murder?

PIZ. Be it said—I care not! His fate is sealed. Why this interest for a stranger? What is Alonzo's fate to thee?

ELV. (L.) His fate!—nothing!—thy glory, every thing!—Think'st thou I could love thee, stripp'd of fame, of honour, and a just renown!—Know me better.

Piz. (L. c.) Thou shouldst have known me better. Thou shouldst have known that, once provoked to hate, I am for ever fixed in vengeance.—[*Alonzo is brought in, in chains, guarded, R. Pizarro turns and surveys him.*] Welcome, welcome, Don Alonzo de Molina; 'tis long since we have met: thy mended looks should speak a life of rural indolence. How is it, that amid the toils and cares of war, thou dost preserve the healthful bloom of careless ease? Tell me thy secret?

AL. (R.) Thou wilt not profit by it. Whate'er the toils or cares of war, peace still is here.

[*Putting his hand to his heart.*]

Piz. Sarcastic boy!

ELV. Thou art answered rightly. Why sport with the unfortunate?

Piz. And thou art wedded too, I hear; aye, and the father of a lovely boy—the heir, no doubt, of all his father's loyalty; of all his mother's faith.

AL. The heir, I trust, of all his father's scorn of fraud, oppression, and hypocrisy—the heir, I hope, of all his mother's virtue, gentleness, and truth—the heir, I trust, to all Pizarro's hate.

Piz. Really! Now do I feel for this poor orphan; for fatherless to-morrow's sun shall see that child. Alonzo, thy hours are numbered.

ELV. Pizarro—no!

Piz. Hence—or dread my anger,

ELV. (C.) I will not hence; nor do I dread thy anger.

AL. [*To Elvira.*] Generous loveliness! spare thy un-availing pity.—Seek not to thwart the tiger with his prey beneath his fangs.

Piz. Audacious rebel! Thou a renegade from thy monarch and thy God!

AL. 'Tis false.

Piz. Art thou not, tell me, a deserter from thy country's legions, and, with vile heathens leagued, hast thou not warred against thy native land?

AL. No! Deserter I am none! I was not born among robbers! pirates! murderers!—When those legions, lured

by the abhorred lust of gold, and by thy foul ambition urged, forgot the honour of Castilians, and forsook the duties of humanity, they deserted me. I have not warred against my native land, but against those who have usurp'd its power. The banners of my country, when first I followed arms beneath them, were Justice, Faith, and Mercy. If these are beaten down, and trampled under foot—I have no country, nor exists the power entitled to reproach me with revolt.

PIZ. The power to judge and punish thee at least exists.

AL. Where are my judges?

PIZ. Thou wouldst appeal to the war-council?

AL. If the good Las-Casas have yet a seat there, yes; if not, I appeal to heaven!

PIZ. And to impose upon the folly of Las-Casas, what would be the excuses of thy treason?

ELV. The folly of Las-Casas!—Such, doubtless, his mild precepts seem to thy hard-hearted wisdom!—O! would I might have lived as I will die, a sharer in the follies of Las-Casas!

AL. To him I should not need, to urge the foul barbarities which drove me from your side; but I would gently lead him by the hand, through all the lovely fields of Quito; there, in many a spot, where late was barrenness and waste, I would show him how now the opening blossom, blade, or perfumed but, sweet bashful pledges of delicious harvest, wafting their incense to the ripening sun, give cheerful promise to the hope of industry. This, I would say, is my work! I would show him many an eye, and many a hand, by gentleness from error won, raised in pure devotion to the true and only God.—This too I could tell him is Alonzo's work! Then would Las-Casas clasp me in his aged arms; from his uplifted eyes a tear of gracious thankfulness would fall upon my head, and that one blessed drop would be to me at once this world's best proof, that I had acted rightly here, and surest hope of my Creator's mercy and reward hereafter.

ELV. Happy, virtuous Alonzo! And thou, Pizarro, wouldst appal, with fear or death, a man who thinks and acts as he does!

Piz. Daring, obstinate enthusiast! But know, the pious blessing of thy preceptor's tears does not avail thee here; he has fled like thee—like thee, no doubt, to join the foes of Spain. The perilous trial of the next reward thou hopest, is nearer than perhaps thou'st thought; for, by my country's wrongs, and by mine own, to-morrow's sun shall see thy death.

ELV. Hold!—Pizarro, hear me!—If not always justly, at least act always greatly. Name not thy country's wrongs—'tis plain they have no share in thy resentment. Thy fury 'gainst this youth is private hate, and deadly personal revenge; if this be so—and even now thy detected conscience in that look avows it—profane not the name of justice or thy country's cause, but let him arm, and bid him to the field on equal terms.

Piz. Officious advocate for treason—peace! Bear him hence—he knows his sentence. *[Retires back.]*

AL. *[To Piz.]* Thy revenge is eager, and I'm thankful for it;—to me thy haste is mercy. *[To Elv.]* For thee, sweet pleader in misfortune's cause, accept my parting thanks. This camp is not thy proper sphere. Wert thou among yon savages, as they are called, thou'dst find companions more congenial to thy heart.

Piz. *[Returns to c.]* Yes; she shall bear the tidings of thy death to Cora.

AL. Inhuman man! that pang at least might have been spared me: but thy malice shall not shake my constancy. I go to death—many shall bless, and none shall curse my memory. Thou still wilt live, and still wilt be—Pizarro.

[Exit, guarded, a.]

ELV. (L. c.) Now, by the indignant scorn that burns upon my cheek, my soul is shamed and sickened at the meanness of thy vengeance.

Piz. What has thy romantic folly aimed at? He is mine enemy, and is my power.

ELV. (a.) He is in your power, and therefore is no more an enemy. Pizarro, I demand not of thee justice—I ask not from thee nobleness of mine—I require only just dealing to the same thou hast acquired: be not the assassin

of thine own renown. Do not act that which, howe'er thy present power may gloss it to the world, will make thee hateful to all future ages—accursed and scorned by posterity.

PIZ. And should posterity applaud my deeds, think'st thou my mouldering bones would rattle then with transport in my tomb? This is renown for visionary boys to dream of—I understand it not. The fame I value shall uplift my living estimation—o'erbear with popular support the envy of my foes—advance my purposes, and aid my power.

ELV. Pizarro, thou no longer lov'st me.

PIZ. It is not so, Elvira. But what might I not suspect—this wond'rous interest for a stranger! Take back thy reproach.

ELV. No, Pizarro; as yet I am not lost to thee—one string still remains, and binds me to thy fate. Do not, I conjure thee—do not, for mine own sake, tear it asunder—shed not Alonzo's blood!

PIZ. My resolution is fixed.

ELV. Even though that moment lost thee Elvira for ever?

PIZ. Even so.

ELV. Pizarro, if not to honour, if not to humanity, yet listen to affection; bear some memory of the sacrifices I have made for thy sake. Have I not for thee quitted my parents, my friends, my fame, my native land? When escaping, did I not risk, in rushing to thy arms, to bury myself in the bosom of the deep? Have I not shared all thy perils—heavy storms at sea, and frightful 'scapes on shore? Even on this dreadful day, amid the rout of battle, who remained firm and constant at Pizarro's side? Who presented her bosom as his shield to the assailing foe?

PIZ. 'Tis truly spoken all. In love thou art thy sex's miracle—in war the soldier's pattern—and therefore my whole heart and half my acquisitions are thy right.

ELV. Convince me I possess the first—I exchange all title to the latter, for—mercy to Alonzo.

PIZ. No more! Had I intended to prolong his doom,

each word thou utterest now would hasten on his fate.

ELV. Alonzo then at morn will die?

PIZ. Think'st thou yon sun will set! as surely at his rising shall Alonzo die.

ELV. (C.) Then be it done—the string is cracked—sundered for ever. But mark me—thou hast heretofore had cause, 'tis true, to doubt my resolution, howe'er offended—but mark me now—the lips which, cold and jeering, barbing revenge with rancorous mockery, can insult a fallen enemy, shall never more receive the pledge of love: the arm which, unshaken by its bloody purpose, shall assign to needless torture the victim who avows his heart, never more shall press the hand of faith! Pizarro, scorn not my words—beware thou slightest them not! I feel how noble are the motives which now animate my thoughts—who could not feel as I do, I condemn: who, feeling so, yet would not act as I shall, I despise.

PIZ. [*With a smile of contempt.*] I have heard thee, Elvira, and know well the noble motives which inspire thee, fit advocate in virtue's cause! Believe me, I pity thy tender feelings for the youth Alonzo! He dies at sunrise.

[*Exit, L.*]

ELV. 'Tis well! 'tis just I should be humble—I had forgot myself, and in the cause of innocence assumed the tone of virtue. 'Twas fit I should be rebuked—and by Pizarro. Fall, fall, ye few reluctant drops of weakness—the last these eyes shall ever shed. How a woman can love Pizarro, thou hast known too well—how she can hate, thou hast yet to learn. Yes, thou undaunted! Thou, whom yet no mortal hazard has appalled! Thou, who on Panama's brow didst make alliance with the raging elements, that tore the silence of that horrid night—when thou didst follow, as thy pioneer, the crashing thunder's drift, and, stakling o'er the trembling earth, didst plant thy banner by the red volcano's mouth! Thou, who when battling on the sea, and thy brave ship was blown to splinters, wast seen—as thou didst bestride a fragment of the smoking wreck—to wave thy glittering sword above thy head—as thou wouldst defy the world in that extre-

mity! Come, fearless man—now meet the last and felldest peril of the life:—meet, and survive—an injured woman's fury, if thou canst. [Exit, R.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Dungeon.—Alonzo in chains.—A Sentinel walking near L. U. E.*

AL. (C.) For the last time, I have beheld the shadow'd ocean close upon the light. For the last time, through my cleft dungeon's roof, I now behold the quivering lustre of the stars. For the last time, Oh, Sun! (and soon the hour) I shall behold thy rising, and thy level beams melting the pale mists of morn to glittering dewdrops. Then comes my death, and in the morning of my day, I fall, which—No, Alonzo, date not the life which thou hast run, by the mean reck'ning of the hours and days which thou hast breathed: a life spent worthily should be measured by a nobler line; by deeds, not years. Then wouldst thou murmur not, but bless providence, which in so short a span made thee the instrument of wide and spreading, to the helpless and oppressed! Though sinking in decrepid age, he prematurely falls, whose memory records no benefit conferred by him on man. They only have lived long, who have lived virtuously.

Enter a Soldier—shows the Sentinel a passport, who withdraws.

AL. What bear you there?

SOL. These refreshments I was ordered to leave in your dungeon.

AL. By whom ordered?

SOL. By the Lady Elvira; she will be hers herself before the dawn.

AL. Bear back to her my humblest thanks; and take thou the refreshments, friend. I need them not.

SOL. I have served under you, Don Alonzo. Pardon my saying, that my heart pities you. [Exit, L. U. E.

AL. In Pizarro's camp, to pity the unfortunate, no

doubt, requires forgiveness. [*Looking out.*] Surely, even now, thin streaks of glimmering light steal on the darkness of the east. If so, my life is but one hour more. I will not watch the coming dawn; but in the darkness of my cell, my last prayer to thee, Power Supreme! shall be for my wife and child! Grant them to dwell in innocence and peace; grant health and purity of mind—all else is worthless.

[*Enters the Cavern, R. U. E.*]

SEN. Who's there! answer quickly! who's there?

ROL. [*Within, L.*] A friar come to visit your prisoner.

Enters, L. U. E., disguised as a Monk.

ROL. (c.) Inform me, friend, is not Alonzo, the Spanish prisoner, confined in this dungeon?

SEN. (c.) He is.

ROL. I must speak with him.

SEN. You must not. [*Stopping him with his spear.*]

ROL. He is my friend.

SEN. Not if he were thy brother.

ROL. What is to be his fate?

SEN. He dies at sunrise.

ROL. Ha! Then I am come in time.

SEN. Just—to witness his death.

ROL. Soldier, I must speak to him.

SEN. Back, back.—It is impossible.

ROL. I do entreat thee, but for one moment.

SEN. Thou entreat'st in vain—my orders are most strict.

ROL. Even now, I saw a messenger go hence.

SEN. He brought a pass which we are all accustomed to obey.

ROL. Look on this wedge of massive gold—look on these precious gems. In thy own land they will be wealth for thee and thine—beyond thy hope or wish. Take them—they are thine. Let me but pass one minute with Alonzo.

SEN. Away!—wouldst thou corrupt me? Me! an old Castilian! I know my duty better.

ROL. Soldier!—hast thou a wife?

SEN. I have.

ROL. Hast thou children?

SEN. Four—honest, lovely boys.

ROL. Where didst thou leave them?

SEN. In my native village; even in the cot where myself was born.

ROL. Dost thou love thy children and thy wife?

SEN. Do I love them! God knows my heart—I do.

ROL. Soldier! imagine thou wert doomed to die a cruel death in this strange land. What would be thy last request?

SEN. That some of my comrades should carry my dying blessing to my wife and children.

ROL. Oh! but if that comrade was at thy prison gate, and should there be told—thy fellow soldier dies at sunrise, yet thou shalt not for a moment see him, nor shalt thou bear his dying blessing to his poor children or his wretched wife, what wouldst thou think of him who thus could drive thy comrade from the door?

SEN. How!

ROL. Alonzo has a wife and child. I am come but to receive for her, and for her babe, the last blessing of my friend.

SEN. Go in. [*Shoulders his spear, and walks away to L. U. E.*]

ROL. (c.) Oh, holy Nature! thou dost never plead in vain. There is not, of our earth, a creature bearing form, and life, human or savage—native of the forest wild, or giddy air—around whose parent bosom, thou hast not a cord entwined of power to tie them to their offspring's claims, and at thy will to draw them back to thee. On iron pinions borne, the blood-stained vulture-cleaves the storm, yet is the plumage closest to her breast, soft as the cygnet's down, and o'er her unshell'd brood the murmur'ring ring-dove sits not more gently!—Yes, now he is beyond the porch, barring the outer gate! Alonzo! Alonzo! my friend! Ha! In gentle sleep! Alonzo—rise!

AL. How! is my hour elapsed? Well, [*Returning from the recess, R. U. E.*] I am ready.

ROL. Alonzo—know me.

AL. What voice is that?

ROL. 'Tis Rolla's.

[*Takes off his disguise.*]

AL. Rolla! my friend! [*Embraces him.*] Heavens!—how couldst thou pass the guard? Did this habit——

ROL. There is not a moment to be lost in words; this disguise I tore from the dead body of a friar, as I pass'd our field of battle: it has gained me entrance to thy dungeon; now take it, thou, and fly.

AL. And Rolla——

ROL. Will remain here in thy place.

AL. And die for me? No! Rather eternal tortures rack me.

ROL. I shall not die, Alonzo. It is thy life Pizarro seeks, not Rolla's; and from my prison soon will thy arm deliver me; or, should it be otherwise, I am as a blighted plantain, standing alone amid the sandy desert. Nothing seeks or lives beneath my shelter. Thou art—a husband and a father—the being of a lovely wife and helpless infant hangs upon thy life. Go! go, Alonzo! Go, to save, not thyself, but Cora and thy child!

AL. Urge me not thus, my friend; I had prepared to die in peace.

ROL. To die in peace! devoting her thou'st sworn to live for, to madness, misery, and death! For be assured the state I left her in forbids all hope, but from thy quick return.

AL. Oh God!

ROL. If thou art yet irresolute, Alonzo, now heed me well. I think thou hast not known that Rolla ever pledg'd his word, and shrunk from its fulfilment. And by the heart of truth I swear, if thou art proudly obstinate to deny thy friend the transport of preserving Cora's life, in thee, no power that sways the will of man shall stir me hence; and thou'lt but have the desperate triumph of seeing Rolla perish by thy side, with the assured conviction that Cora and thy child—are lost for ever!

AL. Oh, Rolla! thou distractest me!

ROL. Begone! A moment's further pause, and all is lost. The dawn approaches. Fear not for me; I will treat with Pizarro, as for surrender and submission; I shall gain

time, doubt not, while thou, with a chosen band, passing the secret way, mayst at night return, release thy friend, and bear him back in triumph. Yes, hasten, dear Alonzo. Even now I hear the frantic Cora call thee. Haste, Alonzo!—Haste!—Haste!

AL. Rolla, I fear thy friendship drives me from honour, and from right.

ROL. Did Rolla ever counsel dishonour to his friend!

AL. Oh! my preserver! *[Embracing him.]*

ROL. I feel thy warm tears dropping on my cheek.—Go! I am rewarded. *[Throws the Friar's garment over Alonzo.]* There, conceal thy face; and, that they may not clank, hold fast thy chains. Now, God be with thee!

AL. At night we meet again. Then, so aid me Heaven! I return to save, or perish with thee! *[Exit, L. U. E.]*

ROL. *[Looking after him.]* He has passed the outer porch—he is safe! he will soon embrace his wife and child! Now, Cora, didst thou not wrong me? This is the first time throughout my life, I ever deceived man. Forgive me, God of Truth! if I am wrong. Alonzo flatters himself that we shall meet again! Yes—there!—*[Lifting his hands to heaven.]*—Assuredly we shall meet again; there possess, in peace, the joys of everlasting love and friendship—on earth, imperfect and embitter'd. I will retire, lest the guard return before. Alonzo may have passed their lines. *[Retires into the Cavern, R. U. E.]*

Enter ELVIRA, L. U. E.

ELV. (L. C.) No, not Pizarro's brutal taunts, not the glowing admiration which I feel for this noble youth, shall raise an interest in my harassed bosom, which honour would not sanction. If he reject the vengeance my heart has sworn against the tyrant, whose death alone can save this land, yet shall the delight be mine, to restore him to his Cora's arms, to his dear child, and to the unoffending people, whom his virtues guide, and valour guards. Alonzo, come forth!

Enter ROLLA, R. U. E.

Ha! (c.) who art thou? Where is Alonzo?

ROL. (R. C.) Alonzo's fled.

ELV. Fled!

ROL. (c.) Yes; and he must not be pursued. Pardon his roughness, [*Seizing herd hand*] but a moment's precious to Alonzo's flight.

ELV. What if I call the guard?

ROL. Do so; Alonzo still gains time.

ELV. What if thus I free myself? [*Shows a dagger.*]

ROL. Strike it to my heart! Still with the convulsive grasp of death I'll hold thee fast.

ELV. Release me! I give my faith, I never will alarm the guard, nor cause pursuit.

ROL. At once, I trust thy word. A feeling boldness in those eyes assures me that thy soul is noble.

ELV. What is thy name? speak freely; by my order the guard is remov'd beyond the outer porch.

ROL. My name is Rolla.

ELV. The Peruvian leader?

ROL. I was so yesterday. To-day, the Spaniard's captive.

ELV. And friendship for Alonzo moved thee to this act?

ROL. Alonzo is my friend. I am prepared to die for him. Yet is the cause a motive stronger far than friendship.

ELV. One only passion else could urge such generous rashness.

ROL. And that is——

ELV. Love?

ROL. True!

ELV. Gallant, ingenuous Rolla! Know that my purpose here was thine; and were I to save thy friend——

ROL. How! a woman blessed with gentleness and courage, and yet not Cora?

ELV. Does Rolla think so meanly of all female hearts?

ROL. Not so—you are worse and better than we are!

ELV. Were I to save thee, Rolla, from the tyrant's ven-

geance—restore thee to thy native land—and thy native land to peace—wouldst thou not rank Elvira with the good?

ROL. To judge the action I must know the means.

ELV. Take this dagger.

ROL. How to be used?

ELV. I will conduct thee to the tent where fell Pizarro sleeps; the scourge of innocence—the terror of thy race—the fiend that desolates thy afflicted country.

ROL. Hast thou not been injured by Pizarro?

ELV. Deeply as scorn and insult can infuse their deadly venom.

ROL. And thou ask'st that I shall murder him in his sleep!

ELV. Would he not have murdered Alonzo in his chains? He that sleeps and he that's bound are equally defenceless. Hear me, Rolla: so may I prosper in this perilous act, as searching my full heart I have put by all rancorous motive of private vengeance there, and feel that I advance to my dread purpose in the cause of human nature, and at the call of sacred justice.

ROL. The god of justice sanctifies no evil as a step towards good. Great actions cannot be achieved by wicked means.

ELV. Then, Peruvian, since thou dost feel so coldly for thy country's wrongs, this hand, though it revolt my soul, shall strike the blow.

ROL. Then is thy destruction certain, and for Peru thou perishest! Give me the dagger!

ELV. Now follow me; but first—and dreadful is the hard necessity—thou must strike down the guard.

ROL. The soldier who was on duty here?

ELV. Yes, him; else, seeing thee, the alarm will be instant.

ROL. And I must stab that soldier as I pass?—Take back thy dagger.

ELV. Rolla?

ROL. That soldier, mark me, is a man! All are not men that bear the human form. He refus'd my prayers—refused my gold—denying to admit me—till his own

feelings bribed him. For my nation's safety, I would not harm that man.

ELV. Then he must with us. I will answer for his safety.

ROL. Be that plainly understood between us: for, whatever betide our enterprise, I will not risk a hair of that man's head, to save my heartstrings from consuming fire.

[*Exeunt*, L. U. E.]

SCENE II.—*The Inside of Pizarro's Tent*—PIZARRO
on a couch, at the back of stage, c.

PIZ. [*In his sleep.*] No mercy, traitor. Now at his heart! Stand off there, you—let me see him bleed! Ha! ha! ha! Let me hear that groan again.

Enter ROLLA and ELVIRA, L.

ELV. (L. c.) There!—Now lose not a moment.

ROL. Thou must leave me now. This scene of blood fits not a woman's presence.

ELV. But a moments pause may—

ROL. Go!—retire to thy own tent, and return not here. I will come to thee. Be thou not known in this business, I implore thee!

ELV. I will withdraw the guard that waits.

[*Exit Elvira*, L.]

ROL. (L. c.) Now have I in my power the accursed destroyer of my country's peace: yet tranquilly he rests. God! can this man sleep?

PIZ. [*In his sleep.*] Away! away! hideous fiends! Tear not my bosom thus!

ROL. No: I was in error—the balm of sweet repose he never more can know. Look here, ambition's fools! Ye, by whose inhuman pride the bleeding sacrifice of nations is held as nothing, behold the rest of the guilty! He is in my power; and one blow!—No! my heart and hand refuse the act: Rolla cannot be an assassin!—Yet Elvira must be saved.—[*Approaches the couch.*] Pizarro! awake!

PIZ. [*Starts up.*] Who?—Guard!—

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Nor think that woman's anger, or the feelings of an injured heart, prompted me to this design. No! had I been only influenced so, thus failing, shame and remorse would weigh me down. But, though defeated and destroyed, as now I am, such is the greatness of the cause that urged me, I shall perish, glorying in the attempt, and my last breath of life shall speak the proud avowal of my purpose—to have rescued millions of innocents from the blood-thirsty tyranny of one—by ridding the insulted world of thee!

ROL. Had the act been noble as the motive, Rolla would not have shrunk from its performance.

Enter GUARDS, R.

PIZ. Seize this discovered fiend, who sought to kill your leader.

ELV. Touch me not, at the peril of your souls; I am your prisoner, and will follow you. But thou, their triumphant leader, first shalt hear me. Yet, first, for thee, Roll, accept my forgiveness; even had I been the victim of thy nobleness of heart, I should have admired thee for it. But 'twas myself provoked my doom. Thou wouldst have shielded me. Let not thy contempt follow me to the grave. Didst thou but know the fiend-like arts by which this hypocrite first undermined the virtue of a guileless heart! how, even in the pious sanctuary wherein I dwelt, by corruption and by fraud he practised upon those in whom I most confided,—till my distempered fancy led me, step by step, into the abyss of guilt—

PIZ. Why am I not obeyed? Tear her hence.

ELV. 'Tis past—but didst thou know my story, Rolla, thou wouldst pity me.

ROL. From my soul I do pity thee.

PIZ. Villains! drag her to the dungeon!—prepare the torture instantly.

ELV. Soldiers—but a moment more. 'Tis to applaud your general; it is to tell the astonished world, that, for once, Pizarro's sentence is an act of justice; yes, rack me with the sharpest tortures that ever agoniz'd the hu-

man frame ; it will be justice. Yes , bid the minions of thy fury wrench forth the sinews of those arms that have caressed , and—even defended thee ! Bid them pour burning metal into the bleeding cases of these eyes , that so oft , oh God ! have hung with love and homage on thy look ; then approach me , bound on the abhorred wheel , there glut thy savage eyes with the convulsive spasms of that dishonoured bosom , which was once thy pillow !— Yet will I bear it all ; for it will be justice , all ! And , when thou shalt bid them tear me to my death , hoping that thy unshrinking ears may at last be feasted with the music of my cries , I will not utter one shriek or groan ;— but to the last gasp , my body's patience shall deride thy vengeance , as my soul defies thy power.

Piz. Hear'st thou the wretch whose hands were even now prepared for murder ?

Rol. Yes ! And if her accusation's false , thou wilt not shrink from hearing her : if true , thy barbarity cannot make her suffer the pangs thy conscience will inflict on thee.

Elv. (c.) And now , farewell , world ! Rolla , farewell ! Farewell , thou condemned of heaven ! [*To Pizarro.*] for repentance and remorse , I know , will never touch thy heart. We shall meet again. Ha ! be it thy horror here , to know that we shall meet hereafter ! And when thy parting hour approaches , hark to the knell , whose dreadful beat will strike to thy despairing soul. Then will vibrate on thy ear the curses of the cloister'd saint from whom thou stolest me. Then , the last shrieks which burst from my mother's breaking heart , as she died , appealing to her God against the seducer of her child ! Then the blood-stifled groan of my murder'd brother , murdered by thee , fell monster , seeking atonement for his sister's ruin'd honour ! I hear them now. To me the recollection's madness ! At such an hour—what will it be to thee ?

Piz. A moment's more delay , and at the peril of your lives—

Elv. I have spoken , and the last mortal frailty of my

2D SOL. Well, in our escape from the enemy, to have discovered their secret passage through the rocks, will prove a lucky chance to us—Pizarro will reward us.

1ST SOL. This way. The sun, though clouded, is on our left. [*Perceives the Child.*] What have we here? A child? as I'm a soldier.

2D SOL. 'Tis a sweet little babe. Now would it be a great charity to take this infant from its pagan mother's power.

1ST SOL. It would so. I have one at home shall play with it. Come along. [*Takes the Child.—Exeunt, R.*]

Re-enter CORA and ALONZO, L. S. E.

CORA. [*Speaking without.*] This way, dear Alonzo. Now am I right—there—there—under that tree. Was it possible the instinct of a mother's heart could mistake the spot! Now, wilt thou look at him as he sleeps, or shall I bring him waking with his full blue laughing eyes to welcome thee at once? Yes—yes. Stand thou there; I'll snatch him from his rosy slumber, blushing like the perfum'd morn.

[*Finding only the mantle and veil, which she tears from the ground, and the child gone, she screams.*]

AL. [*Running to her.*] Cora! my heart's beloved.

CORA. He is gone!

AL. Eternal God!

CORA. He is gone!—my child, my child!

AL. Where didst thou leave him?

CORA. [*Dashing herself on the spot.*] Here!

AL. Be calm, beloved Cora! he has awak'd and crept to a little distance—we shall find him. Are you assured this was the spot you left him in?

CORA. (R.) Did not these hands make that bed, and shelter for him? And is not this the veil that covered him? O, unnatural mother that I was. I left my child—I forsook my innocent—but I will fly to the earth's brink, but I will find him.

[*Runs out, R., takes up mantle, followed by Alonzo.*]

SCENE II.—*The Outpost of the Spanish Camp, and a Bridge.*—[*Trumpets sound without.*]

ALMAGRO.—[*Without, L.*]

Bear him along—his story must be false.—[*Entering.*]

ROLLA *in chains, brought in by Soldiers, L.*

ROL. (L.) False! Rolla utter falsehood! I would I had thee in a desert with a troop around thee; and I but with my sword in this unshackled hand!

[*Trumpets without.*]

ALM. (C.) Is it to be credited that Rolla, the renown'd Peruvian hero, should be detected like a spy, skulking through our camp?

ROL. (L. C.) Skulking!

ALM. But answer to the general—he is here.

Enter PIZARRO, R.

PIZ. What do I see! Rolla!

ROL. Oh! to thy surprise, no doubt.

PIZ. And bound too!

ROL. So fast, thou need'st not fear approaching me.

ALM. The guards surpris'd him, passing our outpost.

PIZ. Release him instantly. Believe me, I regret this insult.

ROL. Thou feel'st then as thou ought'st.

PIZ. Nor can I brook to see a warrior of Rolla's fame disarm'd. Accept this, though it has been thy enemy's. [*Gives a sword.*] The Spaniards know the courtesy that's due to valour.

ROL. And the Peruvians how to forget offences.

PIZ. May not Rolla Pizarro cease to be foes?

ROL. When the sea divides us; yes! May I now depart?

PIZ. Freely.

ROL. And shall I not again be intercepted?

PIZ. No!—let the word be given that Rolla passes freely.

Enter DAVILLA and Soldiers, with the Child, L.

DAV. Here are two soldiers, captived yesterday, who have escap'd from the Peruvian hold, and by the secret way we have so long endeavoured to discover.

Piz. Silence!—imprudent! Seest thou not—?

[Pointing to Rolla.]

DAV. In their way, they found a Peruvian child, who seems—

Piz. What is the imp to me? Bid them toss it into the sea.

ROL. (L. c.) Gracious heaven! it is Alonzo's child!—give it to me.

Piz. (c.) Ha! Alonzo's child! *[Takes the Child.]* Welcome, thou pretty hostage. Now Alonzo is again my prisoner!

ROL. Thou wilt not keep the infant from its mother?

Piz. Will I not? What, when I shall meet Alonzo in the heat of the victorious fight, think'st thou I shall not have a check upon the valour of his heart, when he is reminded, that a word of mine is this child's death?

ROL. I do not understand thee.

Piz. My vengeance has a long arrear of hate to settle with Alonzo! and this pledge may help to settle the account.

[Gives the Child to a Soldier.]

ROL. Man! Man! Art thou a man! Couldst thou hurt that innocent! By Heaven! it's smiling in thy face.

Piz. Tell me, does it resemble Cora?

ROL. Pizarro! thou hast set my heart on fire. If thou dost harm that child, think not his blood will sink into the barren sand. No! faithful to the eager hope that now trembles in this indignant heart, 'twill rise to the common God of nature and humanity, and cry aloud for vengeance on his accurs'd destroyer's head.

Piz. (c.) Be that peril mine.

ROL. *[Throwing himself at his feet, c.]* Behold me at thy feet. Me, Rolla!—Me, the preserver of thy life!—Me, that have never yet bent or bow'd before created man!

—In humble agony I sue to thee—prostrate I implore thee—but spare that child, and I will be thy slave.

Piz. Rolla! still art thou free to go—this boy remains with me.

ROL. [*Rises.*] Then was this sword heaven's gift, not thine! [*Seizes the Child.*] Who moves one step to follow me, dies upon the spot. [*Exit, with the Child, L.*]

Piz. Pursue him instantly—but spare his life. [*Exeunt Almagro and Soldiers, L.*] Whitt what fury he defends himself! Ha! he fells them to the ground—and now——

Enter ALMAGRO, L.

ALM. Three of thy brave soldiers are already victims to thy command to spare this madman's life; and if he once gain the thicket—

Piz. Spare him no longer. [*Exit Almagro.*] Their guns must reach him—he'll yet escape—holloa to those horse—the Peruvian sees them—and now he turns among the rocks—then is his retreat cut off.

[*Rolla crosses the wooden bridge from L. to R., pursued by the Soldiers—they fire at him—a shot strikes him.*]

Piz. Now!—quick! quick! seize the child!

[*Rolla retreats by the background, bearing off the Child.*]

Re-enter ALMAGRO, L.

ALM. (L.) By hell! he has escaped! and with the child unhurt.

DAV. (C.) No—he bears his death with him.—Believe me, I saw him struck upon the side.

Piz. But the child is sav'd—Alonzo's child! Oh! the furies of disappointed vengeance.

ALM. Away with the revenge of words—let us to deeds. Forget not we have acquired the knowledge of the secret pass, which through the rocky cavern's gloom brings thee at once to the strong hold, where are lodg'd their women and their treasures.

Piz. Right, Almagro! Swift as thy thought, draw forth a daring and a chosen band—I will not wait for numbers.

Stay, Almagro!—Valverde is informed Elvira dies to-day?

ALM. He is—and one request alone she—

PIZ. I'll hear of none!

ALM. The boon is small—'tis but for the noviciate habit which you first beheld her in. She wishes not to suffer in the gaudy trappings which remind her of her shame.

PIZ. Well, do as thou wilt—but tell Valverde, that, at our return, as his life shall answer it, to let me hear that she is dead.
[*Exeunt severally, R. and L.*]

SCENE III.—*Ataliba's Tent.*

Enter ATALIBA followed by CORA and ALONZO, R.

CORA. (C.) Oh! avoid me not, Ataliba! To whom but to her king is the wretched mother to address her griefs? The Gods refuse to hear my prayers. Did not my Alonzo fight for thee?—And will not my sweet boy, if thou'lt but restore him to me, one day fight thy battles too.

AL. Oh! my suffering love—my poor heart-broken Cora!—thou but wound'st our sovereign's feeling soul and not reliev'st thy own.

CORA. Is he our sovereign, and has he not the power to give me back my child?

ATA. (C.) When I reward desert or can relieve my people, I feel what is the real glory of a king; when I hear them suffer, and cannot aid them, I mourn the impotence of all mortal power.

[*Voices behind, R.*] Rolla! Rolla! Rolla!

Enter ROLLA, R. his countenance ghastly, and bleeding, with the Child, followed by Peruvians.

ROL. Thy child!

[*Gives the Child into Cora's arms, and falls, c.*]

CORA. O God! there is blood upon him!

ROL. 'Tis my blood, Cora?

AL. Rolla, thou diest.

ROL. For thee and Cora.

[*Dies.*]

Enter ORANO, L.

ORA. Treachery has revealed our asylum in the rocks. Even now the foe assails the peaceful band retired for protection there.

AL. (c.) Lose not a moment! Swords, be quick! Your wives and children cry to you. Bear our lov'd hero's body in the van; 'twill raise the fury of our men to madness.—Now, fell Pizarro! the death of one of us is near!—Away! be the word of assault, Revenge and Rolla.

[Exeunt Alonzo and Ataliba, 1.

[Soldiers take up the body, and bear it off L., followed by Cora and Child, and Army—Charge, L.

SCENE IV.—A Recess among the Rocks.

Enter PIZARRO, ALMAGRO, VALVERDE, and Spanish Soldiers,
R. U. E.

PIZ. (c.) Well!—if surrounded, we must perish in the centre of them. Where do Rolla and Alonzo hide their heads,

Enter ALONZO, ORANO, and Peruvians, L.

AL. (L.) Alonzo answers thee, and Alonzo's sword shall speak for Rolla.

PIZ. Thou know'st the advantage of thy numbers. Thou dar'st not singly face Pizarro.

AL. (L. c.) Peruvians, stir not a man! Be this contest only ours.

PIZ. (R. c.) Spaniards!—observe ye the same.

They fight.—Alonzo is disarmed, and is beat down.

PIZ. Now, traitor, to thy heart.

[Elvira enters in black.—Pizarro, appalled, staggers back.

—Alonzo recovers his sword, renews the fight, and slays him.

ATALIBA enters, L., and embraces Alonzo.

ATA. My brave Alonzo!

ALM. Alonzo, we submit. Spare us! we will embark, and leave the coast.

VAL. Elvira will confess I sav'd her life; she has sav'd thine.

AL. Fear not. You are safe.

[Spaniards ground their arms.

ELV. Valverde speaks the truth; nor could he think to meet me here. An awful impulse, which my soul could not resist, impelled me hither.

AL. Noble Elvira! my preserver! How can I speak what I, Ataliba, and his rescued country, owe to thee! If amid this grateful nation thou wouldst remain——

ELV. (c.) Alonzo, no! the destination of my future life is fix'd. Humbled in penitence I will endeavour to atone the guilty errors, which, however mask'd by shallow cheerfulness, have long consum'd my secret heart. When, by my sufferings purified and penitence sincere, my soul shall dare address the Throne of Mercy in behalf of others, for thee, Alonzo, for thy Cora, and thy child—for thee, thou virtuous monarch, and the innocent race thou reign'st over, shall Elvira's prayers address the God of Nature.—Valverde, thou hast preserved my life. Cherish humanity, avoid the foul examples thou hast view'd. Spaniards, returning to your native home, assure your rulers they mistake the road to glory or to power. Tell them that the pursuits of avarice, conquest, and ambition, never yet made a people happy, or a nation great.

[Takes a last look of Pizarro's body, and exit, R. Body borne off, R. S. E.—Flourish of Trumpets.

AL. Ataliba, think not I wish to check the voice of triumph, when I entreat we first may pay the tribute due to our loved Rolla's memory.

[Exeunt, R.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE
CURTAIN.

[*A solemn March. Enter L. U. E. a procession of Peruvian Soldiers, bearing Rolla's Body on a bier. —Choir form up the R. and L. of the stage. —Bier placed in the C., the feet toward the audience. —High Priest stands at the head. —Cora, with her Child, weeping R. of the bier, and bending over it. —Ataliba and Alonzo on the L., also bending over it. —Guards stand across background. —Solemn chorus. —Virgins and Priests kneel round the bier.*]

DIRGE.—*Priests and Priestesses.*

Let tears of gratitude and woe
For the brave Rolla ever flow!

[*Curtain slowly descends.*]

THE END.

Prologue.

WRITTEN BY R. SHERIDAN.

Chill'd by rude gales, while yet reluctant May
 Withholds the beauties of the vernal day,
 As somefond maid whom matron frowns reprove,
 Suspends the smile her heart devotes to love :
 The season's pleasures, too, delay their hour,
 And winter revels with protracted power :
 Then blame not, Critics, if, thus late, we bring
 A Winter Drama—but reproach—the Spring.
 Whot prudent Cit dares yet the season trust,
 Bask in his whiskey, and enjoy the dust?
 Hors'd in Cheapside, scarce yet the gayer spark
 Achieves the Sunday triumph of the Park ;
 Scarce yet you see him, dreading to be late,
 Scour the New Road, and dash thro' Grosvenor Gate :
 Anxious—yet timorous, too!—his steed to show,
 The hack Bucephalus of Rotten Row.
 Careless he seems, yet, vigilantly sly,
 Wooes the gay glance of ladies passing by,
 While his off-heel, insidiously aside,
 Provokes the caper which he seems to chide.
 Scarce rural Kensington due honour gains ;
 The vulgar verdure of her walk remains !
 Where night-rob'd misses amble two by two,
 Nodding to booted beaux—"How'do, how'do?"
 With generous questions, that no answer wait.
 "How vastly full! A'n't you come vastly late?
 "I'n't it quite charming? When do you leave town?
 "A'n't you quite tired? Pray can't we sit down!"
 Those suburd pleasures of a London May,
 Imperfect yet, we hail the cold delay;
 Should our play please—and you're indulgent ever—
 Be your decree—" 'Tis better late than never."

Epilogue

WRITTEN BY THE HON. WILLIAM LAMB.

Ere yet suspense has still'd its throbbing fear,
 Or Melancholy wip'd the grateful tear,
 While e'en the miseries of a sinkind state,
 A monarch's danger, and a nation's fate,
 Command not now your eyes with grief to flow,
 Lost in a trembling mother's nearer woe :
 What moral lay shall poetry rehearse,
 Or how shall elocution pour the verse
 So sweetly, that its music shall repay
 The lov'd illusion which it drives away ?
 Mine is the task, to rigid customs due,
 To me ungrateful, as 'tis harsh to you,
 To mar the work the tragic scene has wrought,
 To rouse the mind that broods in pensive thought,
 To scare reflection, which, in absent dreams,
 Still lingers, musing on the recent themes ;
 Attention, ere with contemplation tir'd,
 To turn from all that pleas'd, from all that fir'd ;
 To weaken lessons strongly now impress'd,
 And chill the interest glowing in the breast—
 Mine is the task ; and be it mine to spare
 The souls that pant, the griefs they see, to share ;
 Let me with no unhallowed jest deride
 The sigh that sweet compassion owns with pride—
 The sigh of comfort, to affliction dear,
 That kindness heaves, that virtue loves to hear
 E'en gay *Thalia* will not now refuse
 This gentle homage to her sister-muse.

O ye, who listen to the plaintive strain,
 With strange enjoyment, and with rapturous pain,
 Who erst have felt the stranger's lone despair
 And *Haller's* settled, sad, remorseless care,

Does *Rolla's* pure affection less excite
 The inexpressible anguish of delight?
 Do *Cora's* fears, which beat without control,
 With less solicitude engross the soul?
 Ah, no! your minds with kindred zeal approve
 Maternal feeling, and heroic love.
 You must approve : where man exists below,
 In temperate climes, or 'midst drear wastes of snow,
 Or where the solar fires incessant flame,
 Thy laws, all-powerful nature, are the same
 Vainly the Sophist boasts, he can explain
 The causes of thy universal reign.—
 More vainly would his cold presumptuous art
 Disprove thy general empire o'er the heart?
 A voice proclaims thee, that we must believe—
 A voice, that surely speaks not to deceive;
 That voice poor *Cora* heard, and closely press'd
 Her darling infant to her fearful breast;
 Distracted, dar'd the bloody field to tread,
 And sought *Alonzo* through the heaps of dead,
 Eager to catch the music of his breath,
 Though faltering in the agonies of death,
 To touch his lips, though pale and cold, once more,
 And clasp his bosom, though it stream'd with gore;
 That voice, too, *Rolla* heard, and, greatly brave,
 His *Cora's* dearest treasure died to save,
 Gave to the hopeless parent's arms her child,
 Beheld her transports, and expiring smil'd.
 That voice we hear—Oh! be its will obey'd!
 'Tis valour's impulse, and 'tis virtue's aid—
 It prompts to all benevolence admires,
 To all that heavenly piety inspires,
 To all that praise repeats through lengthen'd years,
 That honour sanctifies, and time revere.



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